



# **YOUTH, MOBILITY AND GOVERNANCE**

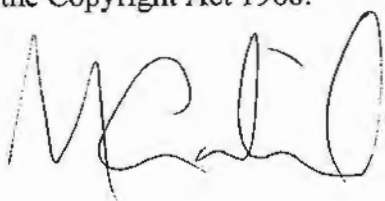
## **ON THE NORTH WEST COAST OF TASMANIA**

**Michelle Gabriel B.App.Sc. M.A.**

Submitted in fulfilment of the  
requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Philosophy  
University of Tasmania, July 2004

### **Authority of Access**

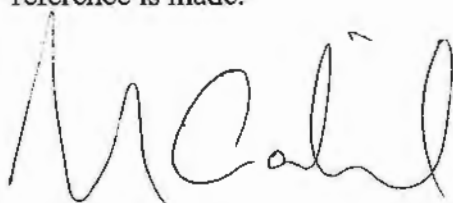
This thesis may be made available for loan and limited copying in accordance with the Copyright Act 1968.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Gabriel', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Gabriel

### **Declaration**

The material in this thesis has not been accepted for the award of any other degree or diploma in any tertiary institution. To the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michelle Gabriel', written in a cursive style.

Michelle Gabriel

## ABSTRACT

In this thesis, I examine the combined issues of regional change and regional youth migration. Using a case-study approach, I trace how the phenomenon of regional youth mobility was problematised, managed and experienced by working families and regional communities in the context of market reform and economic restructuring in Australia throughout the 1990s. My study draws directly on the experiences of three major settlements along the North West (NW) Coast of Tasmania (i.e. Ulverstone, Devonport and Burnie); places that endured substantial contraction in investment and employment, as well as an increase in the out-migration of young people, following the national recession of 1991. In contrast to past regional and community research, I incorporate recent theoretical and methodological revisions within sociology into my analysis. In accordance with these revisions, I examine the discursive aspects of regional youth migration, the governmental aspects of regional youth migration, and I focus attention on young people's experiences and social practices. Here I rely on a range of data sources including local media articles, policy documents, local histories, and secondary statistical data. My analysis is also based on interviews I conducted with service providers, regional leaders, parents and young people from the NW Coast.

My research draws attention to the spatial, generational and cultural tensions that arise among working families and within industrial communities during periods of economic restructuring. In general, I found that local debates and major policy initiatives on the Coast during the 1990s were characterised by a persistent tension between national and societal expectations that young people should develop themselves in order to 'get ahead' (which in this period meant leaving the Coast), and local and community expectations that young people should 'stay at home' in order to contribute to the future development of the Coast. I also found that young people had adopted a range of strategies to negotiate and reconcile these competing pressures. In regards to sociological knowledge and practice, my research demonstrates some of the advantages of incorporating recent theoretical and methodological revisions within sociology into the regional and community studies agenda. Here I specify a conceptual framework that other community researchers may adopt and adapt in future. This framework calls on researchers to attend to the discursive, governmental and performative aspects of a particular phenomenon, and to practise a style of sociology that steers away from 'universal theorising' and instead is grounded in specific historical contexts and social practices.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people who have provided support, inspiration, and guidance throughout the research process, as well as constructive criticism as I began to translate my arguments into a structured thesis. It was my supervisor, Robert White, who first encouraged me to return to study, and who then encouraged me to face and respond to the rigours and demands of sociological inquiry. I was a beneficiary of his own extensive engagement with philosophical and sociological research, his eclectic library, and his uncompromising editorial eye. Following Bob's death, Keith Jacobs took on the difficult role of supervising a project that was already well underway. To Keith, I am ever grateful for his generous reception of my work. He saw the potential within my research just as I was beginning to feel overwhelmed by the enormity of the task that lay ahead. Over the past year he has been a tireless reader of my thesis in its various drafts. I was also fortunate to have the ongoing support of Roberta Julian throughout the research process. Her qualitative research skills and her particular knowledge of the fields of migration and identity were important to the development of the project, and I followed her example when interpreting my interview material. To these three teachers, thank you.

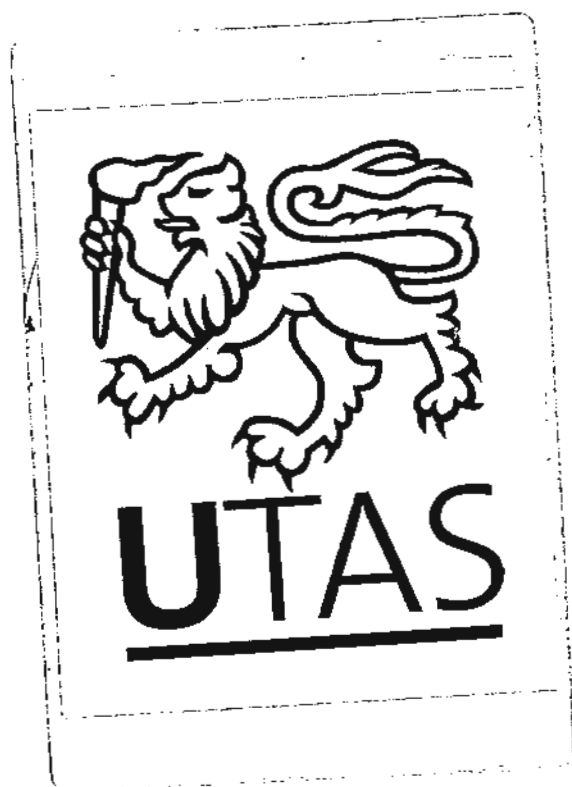
In choosing to undertake a community-based research program, much of my time has been spent researching the history of the North West Coast of Tasmania and talking to people on the Coast about their experiences. Accordingly, there is a long list of people who assisted me along the way and who I wish to thank for their time and their enthusiasm: the staff at Tasmania's state libraries, the parliamentary library, and the Morris Miller library; friends and colleagues who provided me with introductions to community representatives on the Coast; teaching and counselling staff at the secondary colleges on the Coast; local council staff who provided me with materials on their youth policy programs; administrative staff, researchers and students located at the North West campus who provided me with both research facilities and further insights into their own and their family's experiences; those who contacted me about the project and shared their views on youth migration; staff at the Bureau of Rural Sciences and the Australian Bureau of Statistics; postgraduates in the School of Sociology and Social Work and the School of Geography and Environmental Science; and work colleagues at the University Department of Rural Health, Tasmania, who offered support and assistance in the final stages of my thesis. Special thanks to all those who agreed to be interviewed for this project: community representatives, parents and young people. Your insights challenged many of my early assumptions and reorientated my thesis.



Also, thank you to Cherie and Clayton, Maggie and Brian, and Betty for your generous hospitality on my visits to the Coast.

A final thank you must go to family and friends who supported me along the way, especially to my partner Rob.

The thesis is dedicated to the memory of my good friend and teacher: Bob Damien White, 1947-2002.



# CONTENTS

## *Chapter 1*

A RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR THE ANALYSIS OF YOUTH, MOBILITY AND GOVERNANCE	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Research Problem	2
1.2.1 Rethinking sociological practice	3
1.2.2 Rethinking regional and community studies	6
1.3 Research Program	9
1.3.1 Research approach	9
1.3.2 Selection of case	12
1.3.3 Sites of investigation	14
1.4 Summary	16

## *Chapter 2*

CONSTRUCTING YOUTH MIGRATION AS A COMMUNITY PROBLEM	17
2.1 Chapter Plan	17
2.2 Youth, Mobility and Classification	18
2.2.1 Discourse and classification	18
2.2.2 Classifying work (I)	24
2.2.3 Classification in youth migration research	25
2.2.4 Classifying work (II)	32
2.3 Research Methods	34
2.4 Population Anxieties on the North West Coast	36
2.4.1 Australia's regional youth exodus	36
2.4.2 Tasmania's population anxieties	38
2.4.3 Press coverage of Tasmania's youth exodus (1996-2001)	40
2.4.4 Youth exodus on the North West Coast	48
2.5 Summary	55

## *Chapter 3*

STATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD INTERVENTIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUTH	57
3.1 Chapter Plan	57
3.2 Youth, Mobility and Governance	58
3.2.1 Authority and governance	58
3.2.2 Governing (I)	67
3.2.3 Youth mobility and governance	69

3.2.4 Governing (II) .....	80
3.3 Research Methods .....	81
3.4 Mobility and Governance on the North West Coast .....	82
3.4.1 Rationales for governmental intervention in young people's lives .....	83
3.4.2 Managing youth mobility .....	91
3.4.3 The capacities and limitations of managing youth mobility through education .....	100
3.5 Summary .....	105

#### *Chapter 4*

NEGOTIATING SPATIAL, GENERATIONAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES .....	107
4.1 Chapter Plan .....	107
4.2 Youth, Mobility and Subjectivity .....	108
4.2.1 Sociological accounts of subjectivity .....	108
4.2.2 Subjectivity (I) .....	118
4.2.3 Young people, mobility and subjectivity .....	120
4.2.4 Subjectivity (II) .....	129
4.3 Research Methods .....	130
4.4 Mobility and Subjectivity on the North West Coast .....	132
4.4.1 Young people's experiences of leaving home .....	133
4.4.2 Young people's experiences of returning home .....	138
4.4.3 Emerging differences between young people and their hometown .....	148
4.4.4 Strategies for managing difference .....	155
4.4.5 Discussion .....	161
4.5 Summary .....	163

#### *Chapter 5*

REGIONAL CHANGE AND REGIONAL YOUTH MIGRATION .....	165
5.1 Economic Restructuring in Regional Australia .....	165
5.1.1 Regional development and youth development .....	166
5.1.2 Generational tensions .....	168
5.1.3 Practical implications of research .....	169
5.2 Productive Directions in Regional and Community Research .....	170
5.2.1 Advancing Australian community studies .....	171
5.2.2 Reappraisal of regional youth migration literature .....	172
5.3 Productive Directions in Sociological Research and Practice .....	177
5.4 Future Research .....	179

REFERENCES .....	181
------------------	-----

#### *Appendix A*

#### *Appendix B*

# *Chapter 1*

## **A RESEARCH PROGRAM FOR THE ANALYSIS OF YOUTH, MOBILITY AND GOVERNANCE**

### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Following the experience of other advanced industrial nations, the Australian political and economic landscape has undergone a dramatic transformation over the past two decades. Throughout this period working Australians have endured a battery of market-based reform as their political leaders have sought to re-negotiate the key principles that have underpinned Australian development since federation: industry protection, wage arbitration, state paternalism, imperial benevolence, and 'White Australia'<sup>1</sup> (Kelly 1992: 1-2). Such reform has included the deregulation of the national economy, the privatisation of public utilities, the reduction of import tariffs, and the introduction of competition policy. While the evidence to date suggests that this reform has facilitated national economic growth and has enabled Australian businesses to compete more effectively on the global stage (Parham 1997), social commentators have documented a simultaneous growth in social inequality among Australian workers and between various regions (Gregory and Hunter 1996; Bryson and Winter 1999; Pritchard and McManus 2000; Lockie and Bourke 2001; Harding and Greenwell 2002; Pusey 2003). My thesis adds to this emerging body of work on economic restructuring and market reform in Australia, but with a focus on the effects of this reform on regional, industrial communities such as the North West (NW) Coast of Tasmania. Here I examine specifically the combined issues of regional change and regional youth migration.

In contributing to this national research agenda, I initially looked for guidance predominantly from my disciplinary home, sociology. Here, however, I discovered a host of theoretical disruptions within the humanities and social sciences, which I felt required some deliberation before proceeding with a research program aimed at studying regional

---

<sup>1</sup> This belief in a 'white' or 'anglo' nationalism shaped Australia's inter-war and post-war migration policy. For example, preferential treatment was granted to British migrants and the state encouraged the assimilation of non-English speaking migrants.

change and regional youth migration. I realised early on in my research program that the 'discursive' and 'governmental' turns that had occurred within the general discipline of sociology, had yet to be absorbed within the two research fields I was particularly interested in: regional and community studies and regional migration. Accordingly, my research program headed in a new path and the focus of my research shifted slightly to encompass these disciplinary concerns. My overarching aim, therefore, has been to identify the major developments within contemporary sociology and social theory, and to consider how these developments might contribute to a more fruitful and relevant regional and community research agenda. While the conceptual framework I have produced through this research program draws attention to aspects of regional community life that have previously been obscured within social research, I also hope that by confronting and dealing with the major theoretical revisions being debated in contemporary sociology that I am able to provide a more comprehensive view of regional change and regional youth migration than I otherwise might have.

In the following sections, I discuss several major shifts in contemporary sociology which I contend are yet to be absorbed into research on regional communities and regional migration. I then outline the research program that I developed in order to address this concern. Here I discuss the research approach, the selection of the NW Coast as my case study site, and the key areas of investigation.

## **1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM**

As stated above, the overarching research problem addressed in my thesis relates to the theoretical assumptions that currently inform research on regional communities and regional migration. Throughout this thesis I consider how recent shifts within contemporary sociology and social theory might contribute to a more fruitful and relevant regional and community research agenda. In accordance with this aim, I provide a summary of new directions within sociological practice, I discuss the degree to which such shifts have been absorbed within the fields of community studies and regional youth migration, and I specify how my research can contribute to current debates within these fields.

### 1.2.1 Rethinking sociological practice

While debate and revision are permanent features of sociological practice, the broad 'rethink' that has occurred within the humanities and social sciences during the second part of the twentieth century constitutes a thorough critique of the mainstream social and political theories that prevailed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. At the heart of this philosophical turn is a growing scepticism towards the legacy of Enlightenment, in which human reason and scientific rationality are viewed as the twin-motors of human progress and development (Munck 2000; Porter 2001). Although such scepticism has diverse origins and has taken form within various intellectual traditions, Nietzsche's (1909/1968) critique of the spirit of modern civilization has been particularly influential in the development of this new philosophical epoch (Cuff *et al.* 1998: 240-241). Drawing on his work, contemporary writers, working under the labels of post-structuralism and post-modernism, have developed several lines of critique centred on a rejection of the major philosophical assumptions that have underpinned Cartesian Western metaphysics; such as the belief that there is a set of natural laws that can be discovered through induction and deduction, and the belief that scientific knowledge is independent of particular institutional settings (O'Neill 1999). These critics have drawn attention to the instability of the major binary categories that have been deployed within the physical and social sciences; categories that have previously been assumed to be universal and natural (Foucault 1966/2002; Haraway 1991; Latour 1993; Laclau 1994). In particular, they have taken aim at the distinction between mind and body that has dominated much social and political theory (Turner 1984; Butler 1993; Grosz 1994).

Although this 'rethink' has taken some extreme, nihilistic forms, it has also been viewed as a productive opportunity for the articulation of a new sociological practice; one that is more reflexive and more humble than its predecessor. Within the social sciences, there have been three specific revisions that have been particularly important in setting sociological practice on this new path. These revisions include: the discursive turn; the governmental turn; and the reappraisal of modern subjectivity.

#### *The discursive turn*

In the rush to make sense of social reality and the world they inhabit, social scientists have often overlooked language in favour of social behaviour and action. Given this tendency,

one of the most important developments within the social sciences in recent times has been the 'discovery' of language, narrative and discourse as an intractable part of social life and human action (Fairclough 1992; Wetherell *et al.* 2001). As key proponents of the philosophical scepticism referred to above, Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault have played an important role in this 'discovery' in their illustration of the limits of prevailing, structuralist accounts of language, and in their reappraisal of the relationship between language, knowledge and political power (Finlayson 1999: 61-64). These writers do not concur with the structuralist position that there exists one universal language comprised of a discrete set of patterns and meanings, but instead they view language as historically variable and the meaning of particular signs to be highly unstable (Finlayson 1999: 63-64). Despite this variability, Derrida and Foucault recognise that language is organised in particular ways and they use the term 'discourse' to refer to the consolidation of particular meanings in particular institutional settings over time. For both Derrida and Foucault, discursive formations are understood as an attempt by some to ascribe and fix meaning, and to obscure the contingent nature of knowledge (Finlayson 1999: 64).

The type of discursive analysis that is currently being practised by contemporary sociologists has taken two major forms. While those influenced by Derrida have focused on the instability of meaning and have sought to identify disruptions and discontinuities within a particular text or a particular writer's oeuvre, those influenced by Foucault have traced the various discursive formations (i.e. the sets of rules that govern what is intelligible or rather what can be said) that have prevailed during particular historical junctures (Potter and Wetherell 1994: 48-55) [These issues are revisited and discussed in further detail in chapter two].

### ***The governmental turn***

In view of the broad philosophical 'rethink' outlined above, mainstream political theorems (i.e. those that have dominated the social sciences from the eighteenth century onwards) have also been subject to comprehensive reappraisal and renewal. Within sociology and political science, the work of Foucault has again been particularly influential in this regard. His writing represents a clean break from mainstream political theorems such as liberalism and Marxism in the sense that he has displaced the primacy of the image of the state in favour of a broad conception of government as the 'conduct of conduct', that is, government refers to any activity undertaken by a variety of players who seek to shape the way people fashion and regulate themselves (Dean 1999: 11). Critically though, and in contrast to

existing approaches, Foucault recognises that such action is not congruent with obvious and predictable outcomes, but rather such strategies are formulated and executed in view of a host of competing activities, and typically generate diverse and unexpected effects. In general, those who have borrowed from Foucault's work view the activities associated with governing as tenuous, reversible, improvised and contingent (Rose 1999a; Dean 1999). In contrast to their predecessors, these social and political analysts dispense with the task of explaining government actions and instead turn their attention towards the formation and transformation of particular rationalised strategies, programmes and techniques, as well as the subsequent effects of these complex assemblages (Rose 1999a: 3-5) [These issues are revisited and discussed in further detail in chapter three].

### *Modern subjects*

The third philosophical overhaul that has occurred within the social sciences concerns the relationship between the self and society and how social scientists understand identity and subjectivity. At stake here is the way humans think about and understand themselves. Put simply, the Enlightenment philosophers bequeathed a view of humans as individual, rational agents, which possess unique and intrinsic identities and personalities (Ashe 1999: 89-109). In contrast, contemporary post-structuralist writers have argued in favour of dispensing with essentialist and universalistic accounts of identity, in which, for example, the feminine is perceived foremost as a naturalistic category as opposed to an historical construct (Butler 1990; Haraway 1991: 155-161; Grosz 1994). They suggest that such accounts inaccurately delineate between a socially constructed exterior and a naturally occurring interior self, and that they obscure the historically contingent nature of particular identities. Accordingly, the self is no longer viewed as a fixed and stable referent, but rather the self is "strategic and positional" (Hall 1996: 3) and it is enacted in particular localities, rather than being codified *a priori*. Such commentators have also criticised the assumption of a contained and coherent self, and in its place they have sought recognition for multi-vocal, fragmented and hybrid identities, in which the self is viewed as a necessarily open-ended and incomplete project (Hall 1996: 4). Once again Foucault's writing has been influential in the formation of this line of critique and in the development of an alternative, "performative" (Butler 1990) view of the self. A considerable debt is also owed to Jacques Lacan's assault on egoistic models of subjectivity within the discipline of psychology in the late 1970s (Ashe 1999: 96) [These issues are revisited and discussed in further detail in chapter four].



### 1.2.2 Rethinking regional and community studies

These broad philosophical turns are currently being translated and integrated across a range of disciplines and sub-fields within the social sciences. In reviewing literature of most relevance to my own research, regional and community studies, and, more specifically, regional youth migration, I discovered that there was still considerable conceptual work to be done in both these fields. I now take a brief look at the key developments that have occurred within these research communities in recent decades.

In reviewing shifts in community research, Colin Bell and Howard Newby's (1972, 1974) work on the state of sociological community studies in the early 1970s is a good starting point. In appraising the historical development of the field, Bell and Newby (1974: 3) noted that contemporary community researchers had rightly stepped away from the normative prescriptions offered by nineteenth century social theorists, and towards thick empirical description. Although Bell and Newby (1974) recognised that community research, which typically relies on the detailed observations of one researcher, was not compatible with the demands of positivism (i.e. such research was not replicable), they (alongside other contributors, such as Norbert Elias and Richard Simpson) advocated greater emphasis on comparative analysis as one strategy for addressing ongoing criticisms that community research had become too idiosyncratic and detached from the major theoretical programs within sociology (i.e. phenomenology and neo-Marxism). For Bell and Newby (1972: 250-253; 1974: 309-311), the future of community research lay with a greater understanding of the possibilities and the limits of in-depth, empirical community research. Accordingly, they welcomed recent challenges from within the field, including new concerns raised by researchers over the capacity of community studies to adequately accommodate local and national relations (Pahl cited in Bell and Newby 1972: 51-53) and the adequacy of the concept of community itself (Stacey 1974).

The work of Bell and Newby on community studies was later translated and applied to the Australian context by Ron Wild<sup>2</sup> (1981). Although Wild repeated many of the insights put forward by Bell and Newby, his work was important in providing a bridge between the practical community-based research that was already underway in Australia (Bryson and Thompson 1972; Oxley 1974; Wild 1974) and the theoretical developments emerging from

---

<sup>2</sup> Ron Wild's later work, *An Introduction to Sociological Perspectives* (1985), published by Allen and Unwin, has since been subject to accusations of plagiarism. An inquiry into these accusations was commenced, but later disbanded (Martin 1992).

Britain and America. Following Bell and Newby, Wild suggested that the community studies agenda in Australia could be extended through greater use of comparative analysis, and through greater engagement with classical sociological themes. This he claimed would enable community researchers to “establish wider level generalisations and to bring community into theoretical debates that are more central to sociology as a whole” (Wild 1981: 15-16). Wild’s suggestions did influence, or at least were congruent with, the type of community research being produced in Australia in the 1980s and early 1990s. For example, Williams (1981), Cowlshaw (1988), Metcalfe (1988), Poiner (1990) and Dempsey (1990) engaged directly with classic sociological themes, including race, gender and class inequality, in their various studies of rural towns and mining communities, and they developed their research programs with regards to the broad theoretical developments occurring within sociology. In his sketch of new research directions, however, he did not anticipate the numerous theoretical revisions specified by post-structuralist and post-modern writers from the late 1970s onwards and translated for English-speaking audiences in the 1980s and 1990s.

It wasn’t until the late 1980s that these new philosophical concerns and priorities began to unsettle the empirical tradition of community studies (Bell and Newby 1972), which had prevailed in the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia throughout the post-war period. In Britain, early attempts by sociologists to revamp community and regional studies along post-structural and post-modern lines saw the employment of a new label — locality research (Cooke 1987, 1989; Urry 1987). This debate focused on foundational concerns such as the nature of the relationship between social relations, space and time, and analytical concerns such as mapping what constitutes the local (Urry 1987). Although this approach gained some attention within Australian community research in the 1990s (Peel 1995: 5; Bryson and Winter 1999: 65-70), more recent attempts to integrate the challenges of post-modern and post-structural writing into a community and regional studies agenda have stepped away from the vocabulary associated with locality studies. For example, Warrick Mules and Helen Miller (1997) have re-examined regional cultures in Australia with the aid of post-modern prescriptions, Katherine Gibson (2001) has employed a discursive and governmental approach within her analysis of ‘new regional economic becomings’ in the Latrobe Valley, Victoria, and Bill Pritchard and Phil McManus (2000) have analysed regional change in a way that is sympathetic with the turns outlined above (i.e they attend to the diversity of regional Australia and they favour close, partial analysis of multiple aspects of regional life, rather than opting for a universal and explanatory theory). Although these

new studies do not constitute a new and coherent community research agenda, they provided important direction for my own research.

Alongside these developments in regional and community research, migration research has also recently begun to respond to the major theoretical challenges outlined in the preceding section. Following accusations from Findlay and Graham (1991) that migration research had become isolated from the conceptual and methodological revisions occurring within its parent discipline, human geography, a number of researchers sought to (re)theorise migration research in order to extend the field's gaze beyond its traditional focus on documenting demographic patterns and identifying the 'push' and 'pull' factors that influence migrant decisions (Halfacree and Boyle 1993; Boyle, Halfacree and Robinson 1998; Graham and Boyle 2001). While much regional youth migration has been anchored within this traditional demographic approach, this specific program area has also been shaped by educational and socio-psychological approaches. Accordingly, youth migration researchers in the 1990s lead the charge towards developing a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural aspects of migration, in particular the relationship between migration and identity (Jones 1995, 1999a, 1999b; Ní Laoire 2000; Marshall and Foster 2002; Molgat 2002). Here youth migration researchers have drawn broadly on contemporary analyses of post-modern society and post-modern lives, including the work of Zygmunt Bauman (1995, 2001), Ulrich Beck (1992) and Anthony Giddens (1991). For example, Gill Jones has examined how migration decisions intersect with and shape contemporary, post-modern youth identities. Another 'new orientation' within youth migration research has been an increased focus on young people's life-path formation (Ní Laoire 2000) or their socio-spatial biographies (Jones 1995). While Jones' (1995) approach is derivative of the life-course perspective developed in demographic and policy research, Ní Laoire (2000) has drawn more explicitly on Halfacree and Boyle's (1993; Boyle and Halfacree 1998) biographical approach, in which migration is viewed as complex, multi-layered and culturally embedded. Although there have been some attempts to incorporate the theoretical revisions highlighted in the preceding section into the regional youth migration research agenda, there has been only limited consideration of theoretical challenges posed by Michel Foucault within migration research (Lawson 1999; Philo 2001), and as yet no sustained investigation of the discursive, governmental, and performative aspects of internal migration.

While the above review indicates that community and regional youth migration researchers have begun to think through the consequences of the broad philosophical turn away from

Enlightenment ideas and doctrine in recent times, there is still considerable theoretical and conceptual work to be done. Such gaps provide an important departure point for the development of my research program; a program that draws attention to the discursive, governmental, and performative aspects of regional change and regional youth migration.

### **1.3 RESEARCH PROGRAM**

I now outline the research program that I developed both in response to perceived gaps within existing regional and community research, and in order to contribute to current debates in Australia about the effects of economic restructuring and market reform on regional community life. Here I provide: an overview of my research approach, I discuss the rationale behind my decision to focus on the NW Coast, and, finally, I specify the key sites of investigation within my study of the NW Coast.

#### **1.3.1 Research approach**

The first stage of my research entailed reading widely across the social sciences, identifying the key theoretical revisions occurring within the discipline of sociology, and clarifying my research problem. Drawing on this literature, I began to sketch a conceptual framework that would guide my research program. From the beginning, this framework reflected the three broad areas identified above: discursive formations, governmental processes, and subjective experiences. I also committed at this early stage to a style of research practice that is consistent with the key assumptions found in post-structuralist writing, rather than the 'modern' assumptions that have underpinned mainstream sociology since it emerged as a discipline in the nineteenth century. Nikolas Rose (1999a: 11) provides a good description of what this 'new sociological practice' entails, as well as a rationale for this approach:

It encourages an attention to the humble, the mundane, the little shifts in our ways of thinking and understanding, the small and contingent struggles, tensions and negotiations that give rise to something new and unexpected. This is not merely because of a general prejudice that one will learn more about our present and its past by studying the minor and everyday texts and practices, the places where thought is technical, practical, operational, than by attending to the procession of grand thinkers that have usually captivated historians of ideas or philosophers of history. It is also because, so often in our history, events, however major their ramifications, occur at the level of the molecular, the minor, the little and the mundane.

A defining feature of this 'new sociological practice' is an engagement with the issue of reflexivity. This entails attention to the mediation and interpretation of knowledge, particularly the gap between the work of collecting and collating data about the world 'out there' and the process of writing about this world. Woolgar (1988) provides a good overview of the types of reflexive research practice currently being advanced within social research. Woolgar categorises reflexivity along a continuum ranging from "radical constitutive reflexivity to benign introspection" (1988: 21). Within the former approach the boundary between the representation of the object and the object itself is blurred with the contours of the document informing the nature of the observed reality and vice versa. This approach informs ethnomethodology and entails a radical reworking of positivist scientific practice. In contrast, the latter approach calls on researchers to offer what Woolgar calls "fieldwork confessions" (1988: 22) in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the research. Both Woolgar (1988) and Pels (2000) advocate a middle-road position on reflexivity. While they encourage the researcher to disrupt some of the conventions of scientific research that operate to obscure the constructed nature of research and to attend to questions of where the researcher is positioned within the research process and the written text, they call on the researcher to simply take "one step up" (Pels 2000: 17) and no more, as they recognise that a preoccupation with reflexivity can undermine efforts to communicate research findings to an audience. In Pels (2000: 17) words, accounts that are heavily weighted towards exposing the constructed nature of the research process are in danger of becoming "communicatively dysfunctional". This middle path informs my own work. While I attend to the analytical assumptions that inform my research program and I recognise language as a "constitutive force" (Richardson 1994: 518), I do not explicitly weave my own personal experiences into the research, I do not offer an extended account of my personal background, and I rely on many of the conventions of scientific research when developing my argument.

My decision to adopt a case study approach (Creswell 1998; Forman and Rymer 1999) followed directly from my interest in conducting a sociological research program in accordance with the assumptions and principles that currently inform post-structuralist writing. Consistent with such principles, the case study approach encourages the researcher to study a social issue in a particular place and particular time, and to view an issue from many angles. Although I have made some claims about being guided by 'new principles', there are certainly many precedents to the style of research practice Rose refers to, particularly within the discipline of sociology and the sub-field of community studies. In his discussion of case study research, Creswell (1998: 62) notes that contemporary researchers

have many valuable precedents to draw on in formulating their own research program including Le Play's study of families in the nineteenth century and the case studies undertaken by sociologists at the University of Chicago during the inter-war years. These along with the more recent community and regional studies that have been conducted in Australia since the establishment of sociology departments in Australia in the 1960s provided important direction for my research. In terms of theme area, Peel's (1995) study of Elizabeth (an outer suburb of Adelaide, South Australia), and Bryson and Winter's (1999) account of Newtown (a pseudonym for an outer suburb of Melbourne, Victoria) were particularly relevant to my work on the effects of economic restructuring on regional community life. However, the case-based research undertaken by Williams (1981), Cowlshaw (1988), Metcalfe (1988), and Dempsey (1990) was also instructive in terms of research design, analytical approach, and report structure, and in providing further background on Australian culture and/or the Australian setting.

In regards to conducting case study research, Creswell (1998: 36-7 and 63) offers a good overview of the key steps involved:

- the identification a particular case — one that it is bounded by time and place;
- use of multiple sources of information in data collection, including observations, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports;
- extensive consideration and description of the (physical, social, historical and economic) context and setting of the case;
- (and if appropriate) description of chronology of major events followed up by an up-close or detailed perspective about a few incidents.

Creswell (1998: 63) argues that although the case study might be used to test some particular theories or ideas, the analysis is usually derived to a large degree from the case itself. Stake (2000) has an even simpler recipe for data analysis. For him, qualitative casework involves simply placing "your best intellect into what is going on" (Stake 2000: 445). He notes that researchers are not only required to observe and record the details of the case, but also to reflect critically on what they see:

Qualitative case study is characterized by researchers spending extended time, on site, personally in contact with activities and operations of the case, reflecting, revising meanings of what is going on (Stake 2000: 445).



### 1.3.2 Selection of case

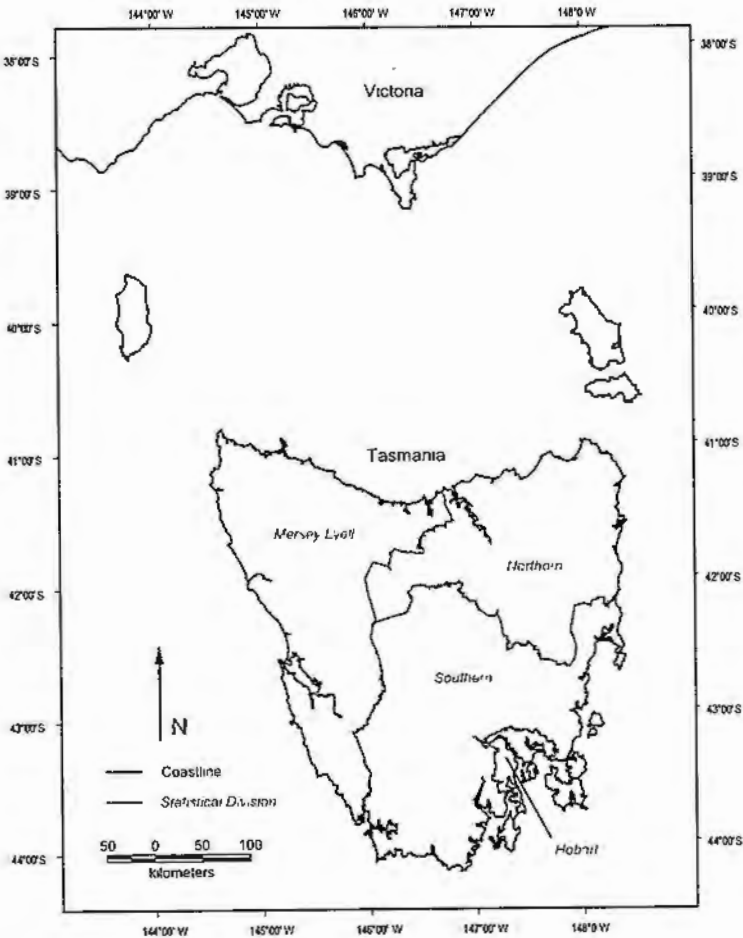
In selecting a case, my criteria were quite broad. My priority was to analyse the experiences of young people leaving their regional home in the context of regional economic restructuring. Accordingly, I searched for a region that had been subject to high levels of unemployment and de-population throughout the 1990s. Tasmania's NW Coast region with its recent history of industrial decline, unemployment, and de-population matched this profile.

Although economic productivity expanded during the post-war years, the NW Coast bore much of the fall-out of national micro-economic reform in the 1980s and 1990s. This resulted in substantial contraction in the local labour market and the eventual closure of major operations on the Coast such as Pioneer's Electrolux silicon smelter in 1991, Tioxide Australia's works in 1996, and the Burnie pulp mill (Associated Pulp and Paper Mill) in 1999. Since the mid-1980s, the Mersey-Lyell region, which includes the NW Coast (See Map 1.1), has regularly recorded the highest unemployment rates in Tasmania (ABS 1990-1999). For example, in September 1991, the year of the national recession, the Mersey-Lyell district recorded an unemployment rate of 14.9% compared with 11.3% for Tasmania as a whole (ABS 1994). In the 1990s, people on the Coast were more likely to experience long-term unemployment relative to other Australians, and people in the early stages of their working lives were particularly affected (Walter 1999). The economic downturn on the Coast over the past two decades was also accompanied by regional de-population. Compared with other Australian states, Tasmania recorded the lowest population growth rates across the nation throughout the 1990s (ABS 1999a: 94), the majority of this out-migration being attributed to people aged between 18 and 29 years (Jackson and Kippen 2001: 27). Within Tasmania, the Mersey-Lyell region recorded the largest population decline between 1994 and 1998 (ABS 1999b: 9). While Burnie, Devonport and Ulverstone, have all experienced a greater decline in young people than the state average, this loss was not as dramatic as other areas in the Mersey-Lyell district such as Waratah/Wynyard and the West Coast where mine closures have resulted in dramatic population loss.

I began my fieldwork in Ulverstone on the NW Coast with the expectation that I would concentrate my research on the experiences of young people from this township. However, after speaking with a number of people from the Coast and doing further research, I realised that it was difficult to disentangle the experiences of the three major towns — Ulverstone, Devonport and Burnie — that form the industrial axis on the NW Coast (See Map 1.2). There was also a concern expressed by local people that they didn't want themselves or their

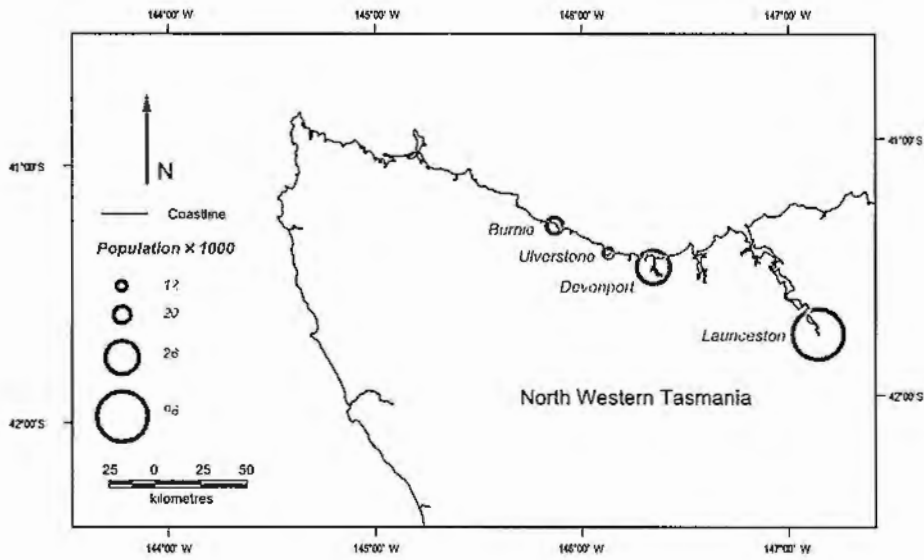
particular towns to be ‘pathologised’, that is, singled out as unique examples of ‘social disadvantage’. In view of these issues, I broadened my field site to encompass the three major settlements along the Coast.

Having specified the geographical location of the study, I now outline the key issues that I focused on within my study of regional change and regional youth migration on the NW Coast.



Map 1.1: Statistical Divisions of Tasmania, Australia





**Map 1.2: North Western Tasmania, Australia**

### 1.3.3 Sites of investigation

From the outset, I decided to focus on the discursive and governmental aspects of regional community life, as well as issues of social identity, in line with recent theoretical revisions within sociology. My intention was to bring to light aspects of regional community life previously overlooked in social research. While traditional ethnographic studies of small towns have typically taken the subject of community as their central site of investigation, the field has also accommodated a range of locally based studies, in which the researcher focuses analytical attention on one or several sites of investigation (Bell and Newby 1974). My work follows the latter approach in that I focus on the experiences of industrial communities on the NW Coast of Tasmania in the 1990s, specifically in regards to the combined issues of regional change and regional youth migration.

While I entered the field with a broad conceptual framework in mind, it was only after I spent some time in the field that I began to flesh out and refine this framework. With an expanding knowledge of the NW Coast's history and current political priorities, I decided to focus on three specific sites of investigation. These included:

- the discursive aspects of regional youth migration; in particular the way youth migration had been problematised in local media and local conversations;
- the governmental aspects of regional youth migration; in particular the way people on the Coast such as community leaders had attempted to manage the out-migration of young people, but also the way discourses and social norms that operate on the Coast had affected young people; and
- young people's accounts of regional youth migration; in particular the effect of out-migration on young people's sense of identity, and their relationships with their peers, their family and their local community.

The theoretical assumptions that inform each aspect of this framework are discussed in greater depth in chapters three, four and five. As it was my intention to reorientate the regional community research agenda, discussion of the conceptual framework features prominently in each of the analytical chapters.

The claims presented in this thesis are based on a range of sources collected during fieldwork conducted between 2000 and 2002. In contrast to much community research, my analysis relies primarily on documentary evidence, personal accounts, and the correspondence between various sources, rather than the traditional ethnographic method of participant observation. Over the duration of the project, I travelled to the Coast twelve times, spending up to a week at any one time. During this time, I met with eighteen community representatives, and I conducted in-depth interviews with seven parents and eighteen young people.

Although I have provided the reader with a brief overview of the research approach and the key sites to be investigated, I have chosen to hold over in-depth discussion of the conceptual framework and research methods until the following analytical chapters. This format is important in demonstrating the strong linkages between the assumptions that inform my analytical framework, the methods used, and the resulting analysis within each site of investigation.

## **1.4 SUMMARY**

Having detailed the research problem, outlined the conceptual framework, and specified the research methods used in my analysis, I now turn to my data analysis and results. These are presented over three chapters. In chapter two, I outline and conduct a discursive analysis of regional youth migration. Here I examine the way regional youth migration was problematised on the NW Coast in the 1990s. In chapter three, I outline and conduct a governmental analysis of regional youth migration. Here I examine the way regional youth migration was managed on the NW Coast in the 1990s. In chapter four, I provide a rather more conventional sociological analysis of regional youth migration, than the former two chapters; one that centres on the experiences of young people from the NW Coast in 1990s. Although these studies draw attention to particular aspects of the phenomenon of regional youth migration, the three studies are thematically linked. Moreover, each study is viewed as essential to providing a fairly robust and comprehensive understanding of the major issues and concerns associated with regional change and regional youth migration on the NW Coast in the 1990s.

## *Chapter 2*

### **CONSTRUCTING YOUTH MIGRATION AS A COMMUNITY PROBLEM**

discourse • classification • population • regional • youth • mobility • media • community

#### **2.1 CHAPTER PLAN**

In this chapter, I present a discursive analysis of regional youth migration. This analysis is a product of my interest in shifting the analytical gaze of youth mobility research from a technical focus on migratory patterns to a discursive focus on representations of youth and youth migration. Such an approach reflects a shift in sociology towards a greater emphasis on language in any account of the social world; a key revision that I contend is yet to be reflected in youth migration and community-based research. The aim of this first analysis is to draw attention to one previously submerged aspect in social scientific accounts of youth migration: how the issue of regional youth migration is constructed and problematised. It is also important in setting out the discursive terrain in which the study of other aspects of youth migration — governance and subjective experiences — can proceed. In this sense, the work presented in this chapter is viewed as one critical aspect of describing and making sense of youth out-migration on the NW Coast of Tasmania.

This discursive analysis of regional youth migration represents the first of three empirical studies and it is divided into four key sections: an analytical framework for studying ‘youth, mobility and classification’; an overview of the research methods; the results of my analysis of local news articles and discussions held with service providers, parents and young people from the Coast; and a summary of the chapter. Within my analysis, I detail how regional youth migration is represented in local media, and how prevailing narratives within local media are interpreted and employed by people on the NW Coast. In doing so, I step the reader through three sites: national debates over Australia’s regional crisis; Tasmanian debates about population decline and youth migration; and, finally, I take a closer look at youth migration debates in the context of local discussions about regional development and growing up on the NW Coast.

## 2.2 YOUTH, MOBILITY AND CLASSIFICATION

The fundamental codes of a culture — those governing its language, its schema of perception, its exchanges, its techniques, its values, the hierarchy of its practices — establish for every man, from the very first, the empirical orders with which he will be dealing and within which he will be at home [sic] (Foucault 1966/2002, XXII, *The Order of Things*).

Throughout section 2.2, I discuss sociological literature that has assisted me in the formulation of a discursive study of regional youth migration. I introduce this section with a general overview of the sociologies of classification, and then focus the discussion on the central classifications that have marked accounts of youth mobility. I examine the classificatory infrastructure at play in nineteenth century accounts of rural de-population and industrialisation, and in twentieth century (post-war) accounts of the international migration of tertiary educated professionals. I then examine more recent accounts of youth transitions and discuss how this writing has disrupted and re-inscribed the assumptions of earlier youth mobility research.

### 2.2.1 Discourse and classification

The explosion of writing on discursive analysis across multiple social scientific fields has meant that a survey of the literature can hardly proceed in a chronological, linear fashion; instead such a survey must reflect the researcher's priorities and prejudices. In the review that follows, my emphasis is clearly placed on the use of discourse in sociological writing (my disciplinary home) and the discursive analytical techniques prescribed in media studies (as news articles are the object of my study). Accordingly, I pass over literary theory and semiotics (recalling the influential work of Saussure and Barthes), in favour of political economy and social anthropological approaches. The purpose of such a review is to specify theoretical considerations and elicit practical strategies for analysing local media.

#### *Marx, ideology and inheritance*

The scale of intellectual energy put to work on the concepts of ideology and discourse was certainly not anticipated by the radical economist Karl Marx. Although the subject of discourse is not at the centre of Marx's work, Marx did put forward two theses of continuing relevance to discursive research: the notion of 'ruling ideas' and the notion of an inheritance of ideas. Both these arguments form the basis of work on ideology and hegemony undertaken by key Marxist scholars such as Antonio Gramsci and Louis Althusser, as well

as influential work on popular culture undertaken by the Frankfurt school and Birmingham's Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies (for further detail see Strinati 1995).

The first thesis of relevance to discursive research, Marx's notion of 'ruling ideas' or a dominant ideology, is outlined in *The German Ideology* (Marx and Engels 1846/1974: 64):

The ideas of the ruling class are in every epoch the ruling ideas: i.e., the class which is the ruling *material* force in society is at the same time its ruling *intellectual* force. The class which has the means of material production at its disposal, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that in consequence the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are, in general, subject to it.

In this passage, Marx makes several key points: that there is a coherent set of ruling ideas within society; that these ideas are determined by economic ownership and production, that is, the dominant ideas are the ideas of those who own the means of production, the capitalists or the bourgeoisie; and, finally, that in the absence of a workers' revolution the working class or the proletariat will be subject to the dominant ideas of the ruling class. In Marx's view, power is concentrated in the hands of a coherent economic elite who articulate an overriding dominant ideology and the proletariat are the passive victims of such ideological oppression.

The second thesis of relevance to discursive research, Marx's notion of inheritance, stems from his earlier writing and is best captured in the oft-quoted phrase:

Men make their own history, but not of their own free will; not under circumstances they themselves have chosen but under the given and inherited circumstances with which they are directly confronted (Marx 1852/1973: 146).

The significance of this phrase lies in the observation that to study discourse is to study the historical narratives and the 'classificatory infrastructures' that predate and outlive particular lives. Although the extent to which men do make their own history remains contestable among sociologists, those who have privileged linguistic inheritance in their sociological accounts are said to fall on the 'structural' side of the structural-agency divide. Their concern is not with individual subject formation, but rather the parameters of prevailing ideologies or hegemonic discourses, and the deployment of ideology by capitalists or a bourgeois-controlled state.

The reprisal of Marx's work on ruling ideas particularly by Gramsci and Althusser illustrates the intellectual mileage of Marx's early writing. These writers have offered important extensions to, and qualifications of, Marx's work (For a more extensive

discussion see Abercrombie *et al.* 1980; Mouffe 1979; Laclau and Mouffe 1985). For example, Althusser (1971/1984) extended Marx's notion of 'ruling ideas' in several important ways. First, he argued for a less economically deterministic model. For Althusser, culture should not be limited to the superstructure of an economic base, but rather it should be viewed as a relatively autonomous structure. Second, he examined how dominant ideas are disseminated through society. Here he recognised the work of multiple institutions, including both *repressive* (e.g. the military) and *ideological* (e.g. the school) state apparatuses. And finally, Althusser extended Marx's notion of inheritance in his work on interpellation. For Althusser, the subject is not a free-agent, but rather ideology effectively calls (interpellates) subjects into being and fixes them in particular subject positions, or put another way, ideologies are internalised by the subject (e.g. a person is named a criminal and comes to recognise himself as a criminal). Although Althusser's qualifications are being utilised by contemporary scholars, his structuralist excesses have been rejected. One continuing problem with Althusser's work is that it insists that there is a dominant ideology imposed from above on passive subordinate groups (i.e. a one-way street). In contrast, Gramsci's (1929-35/1971) work offers a more complex depiction of knowledge and power or, more specifically, how one set of ideas come to dominate another. He understood that there are many conflicting ideas in society at one time and that control of others is most effectively secured via their consent rather than by force. His definition of hegemony — the power of the ruling class to convince other classes that their interests are the interests of all — remains a fundamental starting point for contemporary analyses of discourse and power. The concept of hegemony has important applications beyond class-based analyses and has been utilised by feminist and Third World scholars to make sense of the persistence of masculine ideals and the imperial dominance of Western societies (Said 1978; Spivak 1988).

In discussing Marx's and Marxist work on ideology it is easy to slip from a focus on the discursive to the operation of power and social relations. For writers working in this tradition, however, this is precisely the point; words, narratives and mythmaking are not innocent or value-neutral but rather the act of interpreting advertisements, news items or classifications must involve a consideration of the politics of producing and disseminating knowledge.



### *Durkheim, classification and labelling*

While Marx stands as an 'obligatory point of passage' for any contemporary researcher interested in notions of ideology and discourse, there is another tradition in which the subject has been granted extensive treatment: the social anthropology of Emile Durkheim. Like Marx, discourse was not at the centre of Durkheim's intellectual project, but throughout his work he insisted on the social aspects of language:

A concept is not my concept; I hold it in common with other men [sic]' (Durkheim 1912/1976: 433).

The most comprehensive statement provided by Durkheim on classification is outlined in Durkheim and Mauss' (1903/1963) essay *Primitive Classification*. Based on their cross-cultural comparison of several classificatory schemas deployed by indigenous Australians and Americans, and the Chinese, they observe that categories that are assumed to be 'natural' and 'intrinsic' are in fact 'cultural':

Far from being able to say that men classify quite naturally, by a sort of necessity of their individual understandings, we must on the contrary ask ourselves what could have led them to arrange their ideas in this way, and where they could have found the plan of this remarkable disposition (Durkheim and Mauss 1903/1963: 9).

In view of their observations, they reject the distinction assumed by many that there are some 'loaded' subjective classifications on the one hand and 'purified' objective classifications on the other. Instead, they contend that classifications are simply a product of the collective mind and, accordingly, the origin of hierarchical classificatory systems is society itself (Durkheim and Mauss 1903/1963: 84).

This anthropological approach to classification has been put to work by Durkheimian scholars such as Mary Douglas (1966) in her analysis of concepts of pollution and taboo among different social groups and developed further by American symbolic interactionists interested in the social act of classifying others. This later theory of classification, referred to as labelling theory, is outlined in Erving Goffman's work on *Stigma* (1963/74) where he distinguishes between the normal and the stigmatised and Howard Becker's work on *Outsiders* (1973) where he distinguishes between the normal and the deviant. In contrast to Marxist scholarship, these writers are less interested in providing a strict model of how society, power, knowledge and language interrelate, but rather what classifications look like, who or what is included and excluded from these classifications, how classifications are deployed in daily interactions, and how classifications are sustained or disrupted over time.



They insist that people are not essentially deviant or stigmatised, instead these are labels used by others to signal that these certain behaviours, practices or markings break with the normative order or rules of what constitutes normality. Stigma and deviance are thus not created by the actions of those viewed and labelled as stigmatised and deviant, but rather by those seeking to induce conformity and impose a particular normative order.

### ***Foucault's ordering***

As the discussion above illustrates, the socio-political aspects of language and knowledge have been granted extensive attention by Marxist scholars and social anthropologists alike; however, it was Michel Foucault who comprehensively wrested the notion of discourse from the hands of structural linguists in the 1970s. Writing against both the ahistorical tendencies of structuralism and the apolitical tendencies of semiology, Foucault repositioned discourse within a grid of power and knowledge; a strategic move that has since been identified as a particularly productive site from which to interpret the slippery relationship between texts and social change (Fairclough 1992). Although discursive formation is at issue throughout Foucault's work, his particular notion of discourse is explicated and extended in his earlier writing and as such forms the basis of my discussion.

Those undertaking exegeses of Foucault's writing have stressed the variability in Foucault's project and, accordingly, have found it useful to divide his work into three distinct phases: his archaeological descriptions of discourses or disciplines of knowledge; his genealogical work on the relationship between power and knowledge, with attention to disciplinary practices; and his latter project on ethics and the constitution of the subject (McHoul and Grace 1993: viii). In the first phase, Foucault grapples with the intellectual traditions that he is actually writing within by embarking on an archaeology of the human sciences and questioning how it is that people came to think about and theorise language in particular ways. In *The Order of Things* (1966/2002) Foucault puts forward a history of 'discontinuity' in which different historical periods — the Renaissance, the Classical Age, and Modernity — are characterised by particular 'epistemes' in which knowledge is organised around specific world-views. For Foucault, such epistemes represent a non-unified, multiple and complex field of play in which particular combinations of institutions, knowledges and practices prevail (i.e. a particular ordering), and he insists that the transformation from one episteme to another should not be viewed as the progressive evolution and development of society, but simply the replacement of a particular set of discursive and disciplinary relations by another (i.e. the process is random and contingent) (Danaher *et al.* 2000: 113-30). In this early phase, Foucault argues for the coexistence of

multiple discourses that can change and vary over time (i.e. other ways of categorising and ordering are always possible), he emphasises the historically specific way particular discourses and disciplinary practices overlap and interrelate, and he notes the futility of trying to place such discourses into one overarching hierarchical system (i.e. no extrinsic criteria exists, only the internal logic of particular discursive regimes).

In the second phase, Foucault moves from a description of discursive formations to a critical engagement with the operation of discourse, knowledge and power. This phase is marked by the publication of *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1975/1977), an examination of the emergence of the modern penal system in Europe. In this work Foucault shifts his attention away from disciplinary knowledge towards a genealogy of disciplinary institutions and practices (i.e. prison architecture, prison regimens, and techniques of punishment). Texts are not at the forefront of this discursive analysis but rather institutions and the particular techniques and practices that comprise such institutions. Here Foucault focuses on the set of rules by which truth is produced in particular institutional settings and by which certain statements come to be viewed as valid or invalid. This production of truth is important in terms of how human subjects are formed as it is those discourses that are intelligible in particular institutional settings that give shape to how people see themselves and others. In this sense, discourses are said to be constitutive. In regards to the third point of his triad, power, Foucault extends his analysis of how institutions operate to produce subjects, to how institutions attempt to normalise persons and produce ideal subjects. Here Foucault uses the term 'dividing practices' to refer to the way in which some people are distinguished by others on the basis of scientific or expert judgements (e.g. the mad from the sane). For Foucault, power then is not something held by one person over another, but rather it circulates in institutional settings and becomes inscribed on human bodies and infused in their actions (McHoul and Grace 1993: 26-56).

A useful summary of Foucault's discursive approach is provided by Fairclough (1992: 55-56). He identifies five Foucaultian assumptions:

- the constitutive nature of discourse;
- the primacy of interdiscursivity and intertextuality – any discursive practice is defined by its relations with others, and draws upon others in complex way;
- the discursive nature of power – the practices and techniques of modern 'bio power' are to a significant degree discursive;
- the political nature of discourse – power struggle occurs both in and over discourse;
- the discursive nature of social change – changing discursive practices are an important element in social change.

These specific points, however, only make sense in terms of Foucault's more general project, to write against structuralism and beyond hermeneutics. This project is most evident in: his rejection of the Marxist understanding of history as teleological; his insistence that the 'meaning of things' is always relational and contingent, rather than essential; and in his avowal of the 'death of the subject' (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983).

This brief review of Foucault's writing reveals the promise of his work as an alternative approach to the same problematic addressed by Althusser and Gramsci (i.e. power and language), and as an extension to the question of classification posed by anthropologists such as Durkheim. However, it also reveals that there is a considerable gulf between Foucault's archaeological and genealogical method and my immediate task of doing textual analysis; as for Foucault, discourse is found in governmental techniques rather than popular media (Fairclough 1992: 56). Accordingly, the discussion of Foucault's work on discourse and ordering informs the analysis presented in this chapter only in a very general sense, while the application of many of his insights is deferred until the second study on governmental policy and practice.

### **2.2.2 Classifying work (I)**

The three approaches outlined above specify different aspects of the operation of discourse in society, and provide contrasting theories on the complex relations between language, power, knowledge and subjectivity. It is not possible to pull these perspectives into a coherent analytical framework given that each project is informed by quite distinct assumptions, however, each approach informs and is put to use in my analysis to varying degrees. While the long shadow of Marx is evident in my consideration of the associations between youth migration, economic conditions and cultural inheritance, the case cannot accommodate the model of a ruling elite and a dominant ideology. Here Foucault's project offers several important correctives to the dominant ideology thesis in that he emphasises:

- multiplicity and variability — discourses are co-existent and intersecting, and are subject to disruption and reinvention over time;
- historical contingency — the order of things is not given, but contingent on the particular technologies available at a particular juncture; and
- reflexivity — Foucault attends to the position of social scientists in the production of knowledge.

Foucault's approach and the work of social anthropologists have previously been reconciled in Bowker and Star's (2000) comprehensive study of classificatory infrastructures. Like Durkheim, Bowker and Star insist that classifications are social and as such reflect societal hierarchies. Like Foucault, they insist that classifications are not given nor are they self-

sustaining. And, like symbolic interactionists, they argue that classifications are “continually remade and refreshed with a lot of skilled work” (Bowker and Star 2000: 285). For Bowker and Star (2000: 39), the primary task of a discursive analysis is to “question every apparently natural easiness in the world around us” and to draw attention to the “work involved in making it easy”. Drawing on their practical, integrative approach, I incorporate the following directives into my analysis:

- classificatory systems are pervasive and typically invisible to those who rely on them daily;
- categories are always situated, collective and historically specific;
- categories reflect societal hierarchies and reflect a normative order;
- institutions are active in the construction and propagation of categories;
- human sciences are credited with much categorising work;
- classificatory systems require vigilant maintenance by interested parties;
- categories are contingent and vulnerable to disruption – they can be both repressive and productive.

### **2.2.3 Classification in youth migration research**

I now turn to the classifications, concepts and codes that recur in social scientific accounts of youth mobility<sup>1</sup>. I survey three periods in which youth mobility was granted heightened attention by social scientists: rural de-population in the nineteenth century; the out-migration of university graduates in the post-war period; and contemporary accounts of youth transitions. Such a review provides a basis for comparing social scientific classifications of youth mobility with popular representations of youth out-migration on the NW Coast.

#### ***The industrial revolution and youth mobility***

Rural de-population is a central theme in accounts of the industrial revolution of the nineteenth century. Just as industrialisation entailed the movement of capital out of agriculture and into manufacturing and commerce, urbanisation entailed the movement of people from the countryside to the city on an unprecedented scale:

At some point between 1821 and 1851 a considerable proportion of the villages and rural parishes of England and Wales passed their peak of population and entered upon an almost continuous decline of their total populations (Saville 1957: 5).

---

<sup>1</sup> My review is selective in that I focus on European and Australian research. See Parnell (1993) for a comprehensive discussion of rural-urban population movements in developing countries.

In the United Kingdom, the process of rural de-population became alternatively a site of political contention (e.g. Ogle 1889), a problem of governance<sup>2</sup> and a key problematic in the emerging fields of population studies and sociology (e.g. Graham, 1892; Bennett, 1914). Within these varied accounts of rural de-population, the migratory patterns of young workers were privileged (Saville 1957: 89).

Observers of rural de-population were divided in their interpretation of the issue at hand. Some provocatively emphasised the liberating potential of urbanisation. For example, Marx and Engels (1848/1965: 38) argued that as oppressive as conditions were in industrial cities such as Manchester, the process of industrialisation had saved people from “rural idiocy”. Feminists in the twentieth century put forward similar claims when they argued for the liberation of women from the poverty and constraining patriarchal order of the rural village (McDowell 1999). For the most part, however, rural de-population was viewed as an unwelcome consequence of industrialisation, and discussion focused on measures to fix this problem and guarantee the long-term survival of the rural village, Saville (1957: 155-161) characterises these arguments as romantic in that they emphasised the virtues of rural people and the rural lifestyle, and preservationist in that they sought to hold on to a particular way of life. Although such proponents wanted to arrest rural economic decline they were also against the decentralisation of industry, which they argued would have a ruinous effect on the beauty and the lifestyle associated with the countryside.

The expansion of statistical methods in the nineteenth century coincided with more detailed population records and, as such, increased surveillance of different categories of people and their movements. Prevailing truisms about the entrepreneurial and cosmopolitan lifestyle of industrial cities, in contrast to the backward and conservative nature of the rural village, were reflected in the categories and methods utilised by social scientists. One outcome was a demarcation in the population profile of cities compared with rural villages in terms of age, sex ratio, dependency of population, fertility and mortality rates, disease and infection rates, mental health, intelligence, socio-economic characteristics and physical traits (including stature, weight, build, chest circumference, size of head and cranial capacity, pigmentation and age of pubescence) (Sorokin *et al.* 1932/1965: 3-264). The study of ‘migration differentials’, particularly the intelligence of migrants, was a legitimate research concern in the late nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century and gave rise to the

---

<sup>2</sup> Saville, J. (1957: 36) cites several governmental reports of relevance: the *Commission on the Employment of Children, Young Persons and Women in Agriculture*, 1867; the *Royal Commission on Agricultural Interests*, 1879-82; and the *Report on the Agricultural Labourer*, 1894.

'selectivity' thesis (Saville 1957: 125-130). As Sorokin (1932/1965: 486) and his associates' explain:

Its most popular version is that the cities selecting the more intelligent population, while to an increasing extent the dullards are segregating in rural districts. Hanson, Ammon and Vacher de Laouge based this theory upon differences in stature, pigmentation and shape of head between the rural and urban population. ... Other groups maintained this theory of positive selection because of the differences in the size of average income, the distribution of wealth, or participation in political movements for liberty and freedom; and still others because of difference in standards of living, and so forth.

Concerns over the loss of the countryside's most intelligent and healthy youth have persisted in later demographic accounts, despite numerous attempts to debunk the selectivity thesis through empirical research (Sorokin *et al.* 1932/1965: 507-8; Saville 1957: 127-8).

From these early accounts of rural de-population and youth mobility it is possible to distil several themes: growing consensus over the connection between out-migration and economic decline; the proliferation of romantic and preservationist arguments over the loss of community and a particular way of life; the development of a social scientific practice based on typologising people in terms of migration behaviour, labour value and intelligence; and propagation of the popular belief that the most talented young people head to the city and are rewarded by social mobility and economic advancement.

### ***Mobility of professionals and graduates***

While concerns about youth mobility in the United Kingdom in the nineteenth century were principally focused on internal migration, with the advancement of communications and transportation in early part of the twentieth century economists and demographers turned their attention to international movements of labour. For the United Kingdom, the key problem was a loss of their educated young labour force to their expanding colonies and later to more lucrative and scientifically demanding research and industry positions in the United States. During the Cold War years, the United States, aided by increases in defence expenditure and the expansion of its space exploration program, positioned itself as the global centre of scientific and technological research and development; thereby exacerbating the already disproportionate flow of graduates between the two nations. Among developing nations, largely British and European colonies, the problem was reversed with an outflow of talented students to the universities and metropolises of advanced industrial nations. In the



1970s, such developments were comprehensively documented in a United Nations conference on the international movements of graduates and skilled labour (Glaser 1978).

This international phenomenon was popularly referred to as a 'brain drain' and it became a recognisable literature<sup>3</sup> and a standard concept in sociology (Johnson, 1995: 27). Work on the 'brain drain' expressed remarkable parallels with earlier research on rural-city migration in both its revival of the 'selectivity' thesis and in its very explicit political agenda — it was assumed from the outset that the 'brain drain' was a threat and should be contained to protect the home nation. In these researchers' eyes, the outflow of European graduates was indisputably a crisis for the graduates' home nations, and symptomatic of a more insidious crisis facing Europe and its position in the global order:

... the brain drain from Europe is merely a symptom of a basic disease in the European economic system. The brain drain is one of the most manifest symptoms of the European sickness... (Chorafas 1968: 13).

Research on the 'brain drain' phenomenon differed from past accounts of youth mobility in that the migrants themselves were credited from the outset as rational and intelligent individuals drawn largely from the middle classes. These people were said to have actively voted 'with their feet' and were valorised as adventurers. In contrast, internal migration of the nineteenth century was undertaken largely by the labouring classes at the behest of industry, just as convict transportation was undertaken by the underclasses at the behest of her majesty. In research on graduate migration to the United States' science laboratories and Britain's former colonies, Enlightenment ideals of the traveller being a more tolerant and more intelligent cosmopolitan citizen prevailed:

It has frequently been claimed that the personality may be fortified, developed and enriched by mobility: experience of marked change in environment may undoubtedly stimulate intellectual growth (Musgrove 1963: 130).

Granted this view of graduates as rational decision-makers, the migration of a relatively small, educated elite was also viewed as a direct criticism of the home nation:

... when scientists choose to vote with their feet it is invariably whatever they walk away from that is at fault (Beijer 1969: 8).

The international and comparative nature of much graduate mobility meant that social research in this area was largely based on descriptive demographic and survey data.

---

<sup>3</sup> Beijer (1969: 16) states that there were 426 papers available on this topic in 1969.

However, while much of the early research effort was driven by a quantitative approach, social-psychologists working alongside demographers embarked on a new research direction. If the problem was to be understood in its entirety, and if there was to be some chance of intervention to reverse the trend, then policy analysts would need to know how graduate mobility was experienced, and, in particular, the health and welfare benefits and costs of this migration. This approach gave some weight to the experience of graduates themselves and how migration might impact on them personally. Migration thus became a condition and the new concern was how migrant health contrasted with non-migrant health (e.g. Hollingshead *et al.* 1954). In their concern for the adaptation or mal-adaptation of the individual to changed circumstances, researchers sought to uncover whether the tendency to migrate could be anticipated based on an individual's psychological make-up and whether such psychological deficiencies could be counteracted through social training (Musgrove 1963: 135-149).

In these later accounts of graduate mobility, political concerns about community loss are reformulated in terms of national interest and, in Britain, tied to questions of imperial decline. This research also entailed the refinement and expansion of social scientific techniques whereby demographic models based on quantitative data are supplemented by interdisciplinary qualitative studies of the migration experience. Such a split in scientific approaches is reflected in contradictory policy interventions. While some agitated for improvements in the working conditions of young professionals at home in order to win them back, others argued for social training of young professionals so that they might better adapt to and succeed in the new environment.

### ***Contemporary accounts of youth transitions***

In contrast to earlier accounts of youth mobility, contemporary accounts are typically undertaken by youth studies specialists and informed by sociological and educational perspectives. The effect of privileging the category of youth has been a shift away from descriptions of the migration behaviour of young people, towards a conceptualisation of the transition from adolescence to adulthood. In this sense, youth migration is not simply one pattern within a complex of demographic shifts, but rather youth migration is one aspect of multiple transitions that occur in the early phase of a person's lifecourse: from school to higher education, training and work; from the family home to the group share house or, increasingly less so, marriage and mortgage; and from being a dependent adolescent to an independent adult (e.g. Furlong and Cartmel 1997).



This shift in analytical focus is evident in Australian research on youth mobility. Christabel Young's (1987) research on *Young people leaving home in Australia* exemplifies the earlier demographic approach. Based on a national survey of young people, Young provides a representative picture of young people's patterns of residential mobility and analyses the influence of variables such as age, sex, class, geography, ethnicity and parent-child relationships. Drawing on earlier surveys undertaken in 1971 and 1977, she also examines how young people's patterns of residential mobility have changed. Young's survey work is most notable for its prescience. The key changes in young people's 'leaving home' patterns between the 1970s and the 1980s have since been exacerbated, rather than reversed (e.g. the age of leaving home has increased and young people are more likely to return to their family home than in the past). More problematic are Young's assumptions about parent-child relations (either normal or conflictual) and her relatively linear model of a person's lifecourse. Young (1994: 30) grants the family life cycle greater attention in her later work, but continues to insist on a 'reference youth' by which others can be measured.

The *Life Patterns Project*, based on an annual survey of 17 year olds between 1991 and 2001, represents an update of Young's research and exemplifies the more recent youth transitions approach. The data analysis, undertaken by Joanna Wyn and Peter Dwyer (Dwyer and Wyn 1998a, 1998b; Wyn and Dwyer 1999, 2000), is informed by youth transitions research across the *Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development* (OECD) nations. Drawing on international and Australian data, Wyn and Dwyer emphasise the 'multi-layered' experiences of young people. Granted this holistic approach, residential mobility is considered with regard to a young person's life story. The multiplicity of present youth transitions is contrasted with the predictable, linear and uniform models of the past and the restrictive metaphor of 'pathways' specified by policy makers:

One of the key elements of the 'new adulthood' is complexity. A recurring theme in the research base is one of multiple dimensions of life. Young people at school are choosing to combine study, personal pursuits, and even work, in greater proportions. The transition from secondary school to post-school options increasingly involves a continuation of the effort to balance a broader range of life interests (Wyn and Dwyer 2000: 157).

Accordingly, Dwyer and Wyn (1998b: 285) offer a new typology of life patterns, which they argue is "more compatible with young people's experiences than the prevailing imagery of pathways". The five types of youth include those with a vocational focus (pursuing qualifications and career), those with an occupational focus (pursuing work opportunities), those with a contextual focus (interested in family, community and lifestyle),

those who have followed altered patterns (they have followed a number of different pathways) and those who have followed mixed patterns (they fall into several or all of the above categories). They find some evidence (43% of their sample) for a greater emphasis on 'mixed patterns' among young Australians (1998b: 295-6).

Dwyer and Wyn (1998a: 27) align themselves with other researchers (most notably Furlong and Cartmel 1997) in their claim that young people are:

... becoming increasingly pro-active in the face of risk and are making pragmatic choices for themselves which enable them to shape new forms of participation in adult life not characterised by the permanence, predictability and security more common in previous generations.

Like other researchers in their field, they try to reconcile their own data with Ulrich Beck's influential 'risk' thesis (1992), which emphasises the increased need for individuals to make choices outside the parameters of institutional life. Accordingly, Dwyer and Wyn (1998a: 28) reframe their typology in terms of Beck's distinction between 'standard' and 'choice' biographies. Although Dwyer and Wyn (1998a) argue that youth transitions have diversified, the binary framework of 'standard, traditional, predictable' biographies (vocational and occupational) and 'late-modern, choice, contingent' biographies (contextual, altered and mixed) presupposes a limited field of options (Wyn and Dwyer 1998a). This approach also has the effect of consolidating and possibly exaggerating the distinction between past (traditional) and contemporary (post-modern) young people.

While there is some evidence of the influence of the multi-dimensional youth transitions model on rural youth research in Australia (e.g. Wyn *et al.* 1998; Wieringa 1999), the most comprehensive application of this approach in a rural context is found in Gill Jones extended project on young people from the Scottish borders region (1995, 1999a, 1999b; Jones and Wallace 1992). In Jones work, rural out-migration is located within a complex of transitions and life choices. For Jones, journeys out of the region only make sense with regard to young people's identities, their particular life projects, and their relations with their family and community. The use of several complementary methods – survey, interviews and case based research – enables her to chart young people's socio-spatial biographies, the intersections between the transitions many young people face, as well as, the relationships that enable or discourage young people from staying in their home region.

Jones has a far richer range of source materials at her disposal than the quantitative survey data of the Australian *Life Patterns Project* and earlier demographic studies of rural depopulation, and her work is informed by contemporary theories of modernity and social

change developed by Bauman (1995), Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992). And yet, the signature of early classifying work is evident in her analysis; here young people are recast as pilgrims, tourists, vagabonds, path-followers and trailblazers. For example, Jones (1999a; 1999b) finds that the post-modern metaphors offered by Giddens and Bauman are consistent with the experiences of the young people she has interviewed. She argues that migrants are more like “pilgrims” engaged in a “reflexive project” compared with those who stay at home, and that among migrants it is possible to further identify two types:

... those who retain a nostalgic affection for the rural communities of their childhood (though here the rural idyll and the childhood idyll may be intermixed), using it as a psychological basis from which to explore the world; while others appear to have no sense of spatial identity (and even reject the need for it). These are respectively, the tourist and the vagabond in Bauman’s terms (Jones 1999a: 19).

Jones also distinguishes between “path-followers” and “trailblazers” (Jones 1999b: 156). The former are young people from middle-class, migratory families who are encouraged to follow “outward” paths – patterns already established by their parents. The latter are young people from working-class, local families who embark on their own journeys “outward” and “upward” with only limited guidance from their families. Jones categories do not simply distinguish between young people on the basis of migratory behaviour, but instead they assign different biographical scenarios to different groups of young people.

#### **2.2.4 Classifying work (II)**

This brief survey of three moments in youth mobility research indicates that the topic has received extensive empirical attention from social scientists using different research methods and informed by different intellectual traditions. In the development of this field, there has been a gradual shift in social scientific methods from an earlier preoccupation with demographic patterns, to a later interest in the migration experience and the experience of multiple life transitions. Demographic interest in fertility, mortality and migration has not so much waned, but rather co-exists with a comprehensive field of research informed by sociological and educational theories. In contrast to earlier studies of rural de-population and professional mobility, contemporary accounts of youth transitions place youth at the centre of their analyses. Consequently, such research intersects with the policy terrains of education and the rights of young people, but is detached from political concerns about the home community. There are, however, continuities across the three sites of youth mobility research, namely the favoured technique of differentiating between particular populations or typologising young people. This is evident in early research on ‘migration differentials’, the

distinction between those who adapt and those who mal-adapt to a new environment, and, in its most evolved form, the post-modern niche labelling of particular groups of young migrants.

While classifications are essential in operating in and making sense of the world — indeed a study of regional youth presupposes a distinction between the urban and the regional — it is important to bear in mind Durkheim and Mauss' observation that classifications are not value-neutral, but rather social in origin and as such hierarchical. Consequently, the construction of typologies typically entails a distinction between 'heroes' and 'victims'. In youth mobility research, the absorption of popular assumptions into social scientific constructs is particularly evident in the distinction between the geographically and socially mobile and those who stay and those who follow in their parents' footsteps.

While typologies have some analytical utility when used to distinguish between the roles or perspectives that young people will inhabit in different situations or life stages, the tendency to view individuals with some shared characteristics as distinct personality types is more suggestive of psychological rather than sociological research. As Connell (1977: 77) has previously noted:

Class analysis often suffers from a kind of constipation, produced by the 'categorical' approach ... The analyst with great care sets up a system of sociological categories, investigates the background of people and families, and fits them into the scheme. Once they have been got in their boxes, the analysis jams. There is nothing much more to do with them after they have been classified, except to state the obvious general consequences of their class membership.

He argues that the problem with such analysis is that the object of the analysis, in this instance young people, may not recognise themselves within this classificatory constructs. In contrast to this static approach, Connell argues that social scientists should attend to what people actually do.

In undertaking a discursive analysis of regional youth migration, my intention is to contribute to the research described above; not by simply updating the social scientific classifications of the past in view of new empirical developments, but rather by shifting my research emphasis away from classifying what is going on 'out there', to a description of the way the classifications detailed in the above studies are circulated, redefined and reinscribed by journalists, politicians and young people on the NW Coast of Tasmania. Such a shift is made possible through the elaboration of historical, discursive methods, as opposed to a

reliance on surveys and questionnaires – the standard techniques used in youth mobility research.

Having charted various approaches to the study of youth mobility, I now specify the data sources, collection methods and techniques on which my findings are based.

## 2.3 RESEARCH METHODS

My research on youth migration and classification in Tasmania entailed three steps. First, I conducted a preliminary background search of youth migration debates. Second, I conducted a structured content analysis and a thematic, discursive analysis of local media articles. And finally, I examined the way in which people on the NW Coast employed narratives used within the media.

As part of my preliminary background research, I followed news items on the regional crisis of the 1990s in national media and I immersed myself in the historical treatment of population issues in Tasmania. With a semblance of knowledge of the national and historical location of my case region, the NW Coast, I then searched for relevant texts that might reveal the parameters and contours of youth migration debates on the Coast. In reading youth migration news items from the Coast's daily paper, *The Advocate*, I soon discovered that despite the statistical claim that Tasmania's youth exodus is most pronounced in the Mersey-Lyell region, there was little distinction between the state-wide and the regional phenomenon of out-migration. Given this observation, I decided to conduct a structured content analysis of youth migration news items from Tasmanian, rather than NW Coast, press coverage. One advantage of this state-wide approach was that I could access a good sample of articles through the 'Tasmania online' database, as opposed to sampling and searching newspapers manually.

Accordingly, the first part of my analysis is based on news articles on youth migration, which I obtained from Tasmania's three daily papers: *The Advocate*, *The Examiner* and *The Mercury*. Using the 'Tasmania online' database, I was able to search all newspapers over the past six years (January 1996 to December 2001). Using the search term 'population' I was able to extract a sample of 269 articles on Tasmania's population once articles on animal and health populations were omitted. I then selected 42 articles that referred specifically to youth migration for closer analysis. I also included any articles that I found through my involvement in other research projects on higher education and gay law reform. During these projects, I identified a further 12 articles (See Table 2.1). I used content and

thematic analysis to identify key spokespeople in youth migration debates and to ascertain the dominant narratives articulated by journalists and others.

**Table 2.1 Articles analysed by newspaper**

Year	<i>The Advocate</i>	<i>The Examiner</i>	<i>The Mercury</i>	Total
1996	14	9	22	44
1997	9	11	27	46
1998	9	17	22	47
1999	6	6	24	35
2000	14	4	17	31
2001	17	21	28	66
Population articles	51	52	120	215
Youth pop. articles	18	16	20	54
Total articles	69	68	140	269

Note: 'Health populations' and 'animal populations' were excluded from the sample.

While this content and discursive analysis provided me with a comprehensive insight into the key narratives reproduced in regional youth migration debates, I began to get some sense of both the applicability and the limits of these shorthand narratives when talking to people from the Coast. Consequently, I decided to extend my analysis beyond a reading of local media and to include insights gained through my discussions with community representatives, parents, and young people. Here I focused on the correspondence between prevailing narratives and people's interpretation and use of these narratives.

As outlined in chapter one, my discussions with community representatives, parents, and young people took place during fieldwork conducted between 2000 and 2002. Between August and October 2000, I met with educationists (five), service providers (five), politicians (four) and local business people (four). The purpose of these meetings was to inform people in the region of my study, to collect any relevant background information or data that had already been collated by service providers, and to ascertain people's concerns and opinions in regards to the issue of regional youth migration. Following these discussions, I conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with parents and young people. Between January and March 2001, I conducted seven in-depth interviews with parents about their views on youth migration and their experiences of their children leaving home (See Appendix B for a copy of the interview schedule), and between January 2001 and February 2002, I conducted eighteen in-depth interviews with young people about their



experiences since leaving high school (See Appendix A for a summary of the key characteristics of the interviewees and Appendix B for a copy of the interview schedule).

When recruiting interviewees I relied overwhelmingly on personal contacts. While university colleagues from the NW Coast put me in contact with local business people and key representatives within the youth services and education sector on the Coast, I contacted relevant politicians and bureaucrats directly. In regards to the parent interviews, I used personal contacts to recruit four of the interviewees, and I interviewed three parents who had contacted me about my research in response to a local news article about my study. In regards to the interviews with young people, I relied on four contacts from different settlements along the NW Coast to introduce me to young people in the area, and I then relied on the young people I interviewed to introduce me to other potential interviewees. While I recorded key comments and observations during the early interviews with local stakeholders, I taped and transcribed the interviews with parents and young people. These interviews were confidential and consequently I have used pseudonyms throughout the text when quoting from the interviewee transcripts.

## **2.4 POPULATION ANXIETIES ON THE NORTH WEST COAST**

I open this analytical section with a brief discussion of the national context in which the issue of regional youth exodus emerged in the late 1990s. I then turn to the experience of Tasmania – a place in which the phenomenon of youth out-migration has been particularly acute and which has a longer history of ‘worrying’ about the disappearance of young people than other Australian regions. Here I place recent youth migration debates in the context of Tasmania’s enduring population anxieties. Drawing on extended quotes, I identify two dominant narratives that are routinely used by these spokespeople and journalists. In my discussion, I refer to these narratives in shorthand as ‘keeping youth at home’ and ‘best and brightest’. I then briefly examine the correspondence between these narratives and debates about youth migration on the NW Coast.

### **2.4.1 Australia’s regional youth exodus**

In the late 1990s, demographers noted several major trends of consequence to regional Australia: the national fertility rate was in decline; regional populations were ageing more rapidly than urban populations; family farming operations were being consolidated or abandoned; people on marginal farms or small rural towns were on the move to larger



regional centres or the city; and more often than not it was young families and young people who chose to move on (Pritchard and McManus 2000; Jackson and Kippen 2001; Lockie and Bourke 2001). Drawing on national ABS data, demographers documented an increase in the proportion of young people leaving rural and regional Australia between 1991 and 1996, and specified in which regions this out-migration was most pronounced (BRS 1999). Although the dominant pattern for mobile regional youth was from regional areas to the capital cities, a considerable proportion of young people also moved to Australia's burgeoning tourist destinations such as North Queensland and the Northern Territory (BRS 1999: 23).

While the phenomenon of young people leaving the family farm is certainly not new, concerns about a regional youth exodus were amplified in the context of regional Australia's multi-faceted, demographic restructure and concerns about emerging socio-economic disparities between regional and urban populations in the late 1990s (NIEIR 1999; AHURI 1999). During this period, considerable space was made available in national media to a new collective 'worrying', which focused on what to do about regional Australia and how to address, manage, and counteract the changing regional landscape. Such debate was formulated largely in response to an increasingly marginalised and unpredictable regional electorate in the late 1990s. This regional political backlash was evident in: the decline in the National Party<sup>4</sup> vote to 5.3% at the 1998 federal election; the success of the populist right-wing party Pauline Hanson's One Nation at the 1998 Queensland state election and the federal election of that same year; the 1999 defeat of the Victorian Liberal Government in which Labor returned more non-metropolitan members than it had in its entire history; and an increase in Independent candidates in non-metropolitan seats across the nation during the late 1990s (Green 2001: 64-65).

In the national media the out-migration of youth was typically presented in the context of regional and community decline. Here the out-migration of youth was viewed as part of a general 'cycle of decline' in which young people were next in a long line of regional service withdrawal and loss. The following extract is illustrative of recent media commentary of Australia's regional youth exodus:

The biggest export from the NSW town of Dubbo is not its minerals or its rural products. As Independent member for Dubbo Tony Mccrane says: "The biggest export from Dubbo is the youth of my electorate – 65 per cent of the youth that achieve the

---

<sup>4</sup> The National Party has been the main political voice of rural Australia throughout the twentieth century.

school certificate leave Dubbo. That's a massive export. We want them to stay in the area. They leave and very few come back."

It is a nationwide problem. From 1986 to 1996, the proportion of young people aged 12 to 25 nearly halved in many inland towns. Even in Queensland, the fastest growing State in Australia, inland populations are declining. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics, Queenslanders aged 20 to 25 are the biggest group moving from the country to coastal areas.

One solution is to ask young people what is needed to keep them in their home town. That's just what Queensland ABC has done, in the lead-up to its Outback Revival conference, held in Longreach last week. The forum looked at ways of attracting and keeping people in outback Queensland, especially young people. (Asa Wahlquist 'A long winding track, but is there any going back?' *The Australian* 11/8/1999: 14).

#### **2.4.2 Tasmania's population anxieties**

Despite the amplification of regional discontent in national forums over the past decade, the phenomenon of youth out-migration is experienced on a regional scale. The NW Coast of Tasmania exhibits many of the characteristics that came to be associated with the regional experience in the 1990s — economic decline, unemployment, social disadvantage, and population loss — and as such provides a practical vantage point from which to analyse contemporary debates about regional youth migration. However, it is also important to note that in contrast to other regions experiencing a similar mix of economic and demographic changes, the island state of Tasmania has a far longer history of economic instability and population decline, and the scale of population loss in recent years has been more severe than other mainland states (Hugo 1999). As such, the issue of population has come to represent somewhat of an institutionalised crisis in Tasmanian politics.

Population statistics are not the most exciting aspect of Tasmania's gothic past, but they are a useful counterpoint to the media commentaries analysed below which play on the newness of the 'youth exodus' phenomenon and typically call on the need for new strategies to address the problem. Comprehensive demographic records of the early colony are readily available as the development of Tasmania coincided with the birth of statistics as a central technique for imperial governance. Such statistical records reveal that Tasmania has experienced four phases of low population growth: the 1860s, federation (1900-1910), the inter-war years (1920s and 1930s) and surprisingly, given Australia's post-war immigration intake, from the 1960s onwards (Townesley 1991: 97, 223; Robson and Roe 1997: 111; ABS 1999a). Put another way, it has only really experienced one period of sustained growth, the

mineral boom of the 1880s, since the appeal of gold and the offer of freehold land drew people to the mainland colonies in the 1850s and the cessation of convict transportation in 1853.

In the second half of the twentieth century, Tasmania's growth rate has persistently been amongst the lowest of all States as rates of natural increase have not been sufficient to offset large net interstate migration losses. Table 2.2 provides a summary of the history of net interstate migration loss in Tasmania since the post World War II period. While differences in year breakdowns make it difficult to compare net interstate migration patterns directly, the first section of the table shows two periods when Tasmania has achieved net migration gains. The first influx, 1947-54, is attributed to hydro electricity employment and mining employment in the early post-war years, and the second influx, 1986-1991, is attributed to increased national prosperity, which also benefited Tasmania. In reference to the second section of the table, the past decade has seen the persistent outflow of Tasmanian residents to the mainland. Notably, the net loss of residents in the late 1990s is more dramatic than losses incurred over the past two decades.

**Table 2.2 Net interstate migration trends for Tasmania, 1947-54 and 1993-98**

Twentieth century overview	Net Interstate Migration
1947-54	+1 100
1954-61	-6 300
1961-66	-7 100
1966-71	-7 100
1971-76	-4 200
1976-81	-4 500
1981-86	-1 902
1986-1991	+377
1991-1996	-9 136
Recent trends	
1993	-1 494
1994	-2 107
1995	-2 656
1996	-2 590
1997	-3 661
1998	-3 966

Sources: Hugo 1999: 12; ABS 2000: 95.

The population history of the NW Coast is somewhat different to Tasmania as a whole. The NW Coast was settled in 1829 and grew steadily throughout the nineteenth century. Although the dense forested landscape was a considerable barrier to the early development

of the region, the demand for building materials on the mainland during the gold rush of the 1850s resulted in a prosperous timber industry and encouraged settlers to the region (Pink 1990: 95-97). Population continued to increase in the 1880s as the region was particularly well placed to capitalise on Tasmania's mineral boom (Pink 1990: 312-315). While population levels on the Coast continued to expand in the early part of the twentieth century due to the establishment of manufacturing industries in the inter-war and post-war period, like other regions, development was interrupted by the Great Depression and population growth rates were affected by the out-flux of soldiers heading to Europe (Robson and Roe 1997: 89-111). While the post-war period (1950s) was a particularly prosperous time for the Coast, since the late 1970s business investment has slowed and existing operations have withdrawn or contracted (Pink 2000). The early 1990s was a particularly difficult period with substantial population loss and high levels of unemployment. Throughout the 1990s, much of Tasmania's population loss to the mainland and overseas was attributed to people leaving the NW Coast. Rates of youth migration (18 to 24 years) on the Coast were also more pronounced — not only were there slightly fewer young people on the Coast due to declining fertility rates, more of these young people were leaving than in the past, and more were leaving the Coast compared with other regions around Tasmania. Table 2.3 compares net migration rates of young people on the Coast with other Tasmanian regions during the period in which I analyse local press coverage of youth migration.

**Table 2.3 Net migration of young people (18-24 years) by Tasmanian region**

	Net migration 1995-96	Population 1996	Net migration 2000-01	Population 2001
Greater Hobart	-171	18,692	-86	18,668
Southern	-179	2,167	-305	2,049
Northern	-90	12,121	351	11,560
Mersey-Lyell	-678	8,434	-1089	7,634

Source: ABS, 2002.

Note: Figures do not include overseas migration.

### **2.4.3 Press coverage of Tasmania's youth exodus (1996-2001)**

Population is big news in Tasmania. Over the past two decades the combination of an ageing labour force, a decline in the fertility rate, and the persistent out-migration of people, particularly young people, has generated passionate political debate which in turn has translated into a host of feature articles, editorials, opinion pieces, and letters to the editors. The mid-1990s represented a particularly notable turning point as Tasmania's population

growth rate fell to a level (0.12%) not seen since 1940-41. Looking back over population debates, it is clear that population issues are a routine part of press coverage and as such have never really disappeared from the media headlines. That said, specific population campaigns initiated by both Tasmanian major parties, the Australian Labor Party and the Liberal Party, have provided key forums for public debate and have resulted in more intensive coverage of population issues.

One of the more interesting aspects of population debate in Tasmania is that it is politically divisive and yet everyone agrees that something needs to be done urgently to address population decline. Although both major parties out-compete one another to do more to address the population crisis, it is the Liberal party that has launched the most ambitious policy programs relating to population over the past two decades. In the mid-1980s, Premier Robin Gray embarked on a population drive, and in 1996 premier Tony Rundle established a population taskforce. The aim of both of these Liberal Government campaigns was to attract new settlers and to attract young Tasmanians back from the mainland. The 1996 Population Taskforce pursued a number of novel strategies including a competition which gave new arrivals the opportunity to win \$65,000 worth of Tasmanian real estate, an advertising campaign which used the slogan "isn't this the way life should be" to promote Tasmania's cultural and lifestyle advantages, and a tour of Australia's chat show circuit by political leaders ('Rundle Launches Population Drive' *The Advocate*, 17/7/1996: 5; 'Campaign to increase State's population' *The Examiner* 28/9/1996: 9; 'Free land offer to new settlers' *The Examiner* 15/8/1996: 25). While the Labor opposition was quick to dismiss these initiatives as ineffective, once in office Labor leaders actively pursued the task of arresting population decline. Under the current Labor Government, population concerns have been addressed within two broad inquiries into future directions for the state: the release of the Nixon report in 1997; and a state-wide consultation program called Tasmanian Together undertaken in 2000. Dissatisfied with Labor's holistic strategy of attracting major projects and investment, and reducing unemployment in order to arrest population decline, the Liberal opposition recently announced their 'Bringing them home' initiative, which canvasses 28 initiatives to reverse population decline ('Stopping the NW decline' *The Mercury* 11/3/2001: 7).

The issue of youth out-migration from the state has been a key part of political debate and has received considerable coverage in Tasmania's three daily papers. Through my sampling of population news items I found 54 articles that referred explicitly to youth out-migration between 1996 and 2001. Among this sample, I found four special feature articles in which the reporter provided an in-depth profile of the phenomenon and the experiences of parents

and young people. The following extract is illustrative of recent media commentary on Tasmania's regional youth exodus in that it focuses on the government's desire to retain and attract young Tasmanians home, particularly the 'best and the brightest' of these young people:

... e-business Cyberlearning offers the perfect example of why the industry is helping to return expatriates home. .... Their latest "acquisition" is 30 year-old Sean Howell, a Tasmanian lured home from a good mainland job. "We had a long term recruiting programme with him," Mr Andrius said. "It took more than six months of talk to get him here. He's very skilled, with a degree in computer systems engineering from the Hobart university. When he couldn't find the right work here, he went to greener pastures." ... "We're finding out that a lot of Tasmanians who are living on the mainland are actually applying for jobs," Mr Andrius said. "When you leave uni you're fresh and you want to explore the world, but a lot of them miss home. The bright lights and hustle and bustle soon give way to "Gee, it would be nice to live somewhere safe" (Bruce Christie 'Computer wizards lured back' *The Examiner* 22/10/2000).

In the next section, I discuss the contours of this debate and these two recurring themes in greater detail.

### ***Narrative I: Keeping youth at home***

One of the most striking aspects of Tasmanian media commentary on youth migration in the late 1990s was the call by *older* Tasmanians to *younger* Tasmanians to 'stay at home'. This sentiment — that young people should stay at home or return home soon — was expressed explicitly and repeatedly by politicians and community leaders in the media and was often used by journalists to frame news items. In following the deployment of this narrative, I found that the basic premise of the strategy to arrest the decline in young people enjoyed bipartisan support and was presented as a view shared by all Tasmanians. Surprisingly, the appearance of young people in news items did little to challenge the strategy, but instead they were often depicted as frustrated in their desire to stay at home. Within this overarching narrative the classic distinction between young people who stay and young people who leave is downplayed in favour of the generic category of 'Tasmanian youth', or in regards to the NW 'young Coasters'.

In my reading, the 'keep youth at home' narrative made a media appearance in every year of the period analysed and in each of the three newspapers. I noted two variations within this



narrative: (1) an emphasis on retaining young people and (2) attracting young people back home. The following extracts (and headlines) are illustrative of these approaches:

Tasmania's biggest export is its youth, and unless this trend is reversed by developing the skills of the young, the potential of the State will continue to drain away ('Develop youth skills to stop exodus' *The Advocate* 8/5/2001: 4).

Let's hope that one day soon your kids, and mine, and those of all the other left-behind parents will find the jobs and the initiatives that will bring them back home again across the oceans wild and wide ('Get the Kids Back' *The Sunday Tasmanian* 16/3/1997: 11).

The appeal of this narrative is that it speaks to both the 'hard-headed' economic concerns of business leaders and governments, as well as the desire of parents to be reunited with their children. For young people, the narrative celebrates the capacity of young people to make an important contribution to their hometown just by being there, and is directed towards instilling a sense of citizen loyalty and local responsibility ('Losing our biggest asset' *The Advocate* 25/1/1997: 4; 'Future of region in hands of youth' *The Advocate* 20/7/2001: 4).

The prevalence of the 'keep youth at home' narrative in local media makes sense when youth migration is reconsidered as a debate about regional development and the future of a community, rather than a debate about young people. In my sample of new items, I found that 'community managers', including state politicians, local councillors, and bureaucrats, dominated media-talk about youth migration (i.e. they were quoted in 36 articles), relative to 'technical experts' such as economists and demographers (quoted in 9 articles), young people (quoted in 8 articles), and parents and grandparents (quoted in 7 articles). For community managers, the exodus of youth was predominantly defined in terms of the potential effects on their community. Such priorities were illustrated by headlines such as 'Crunch time: state exodus threat to quality of life' (*The Sunday Tasmanian* 23/7/2000: 1-2) and 'When our kids go north: state infrastructure at risk if population decline continues' (*The Sunday Examiner* 13/12/1998: 6-7). Their concerns related to the impact of young people leaving on business investment and construction activity, a decline in the cultural vibrancy of the state, missing out on the multiplier effects of young workers and young women of child-bearing age, a reduction in Commonwealth funding, and the potential tax burden placed on those left behind (*The Mercury* 7/10/1999: 7; *The Sunday Examiner* 22/10/2000: 4; *The Sunday Tasmanian* 23/7/2000: 1). The return of young people from interstate and overseas was also conceptualised in terms of benefits to the state:



[Liberal MP] said that it was advantageous for young Tasmanians to travel the world, as long as they returned to the State to share the benefit of their knowledge (*The Sunday Examiner* 3/8/2000: 5).

While the announcement of population figures often provoked passionate attacks between the government and the opposition — ‘Have more babies for Tassie: McKay’, ‘More babies won’t help, says Field’ (*The Mercury* 7/6/1996: 2; 8/6/1996: 2) — both major political parties, the Australian Labor Party (ALP) and the Liberal Party, pledged their support for a host of strategies to ‘keep young people at home’. This support was evident in headlines such as ‘Spend more to stop exodus: ALP’ (*The Mercury* 19/3/1997: 8) and ‘Lib leader in plea to bring home young’ (*The Mercury* 18/12/2000: 12) and in the strategies they proposed:

Projections of population decline show the urgent need for greater focus on creating jobs and doing everything possible to encourage Tasmanians – especially young Tasmanians – to stay and work in Tasmania (Labor Premier quoted in *The Advocate* 9/1/1999: 24).

[Referring to their ‘Bringing Them Home’ policy] a Liberal MP said this would target people who were raised in Tasmania but now live interstate and overseas. She said they would volunteer to be part of a database, and would be kept up-to-date on job or business opportunities here (*The Sunday Tasmanian* 11/3/2001: 7).

In youth migration debates there is not only a call for young people to stay at home, but there is also an assumption that young people want to be home. While the decision to leave the state is tied inextricably to the *economic* disadvantages of Tasmania, the return of young people is cited as evidence of the *cultural* advantages of Tasmania: namely, its beauty and its superior quality of lifestyle (‘Exquisite island paradise’ *The Sunday Tasmanian* 20/7/1997: 5; ‘Love of the State brings doctor back’ *The Sunday Examiner*, 13/12/1998: 6; ‘Back to the good life for Andrew’ *The Sunday Examiner* 22/10/2000: 5). Here it is assumed that young people ultimately want to stay at home and be surrounded by friends, family and all things familiar. Young people don’t leave: they are ‘forced’; they are ‘pushed’; or they are ‘lured away’:

Mr Youngman said [his daughter] had been forced to go to Melbourne to find work in the tourism industry after attending the Drysdale Institute in Hobart. “She would dearly love to be around her family but her career took her elsewhere” (*The Sunday Examiner* 13/12/1998: 6).

This reasoning enables a celebration of all that is good about Tasmanian culture and its lifestyle, without attending to young people's dissatisfaction with a culturally isolated, island existence and the regressive politics which marks their home site. Accounts of those who have been ostracised in their regional communities are not considered newsworthy, but can be found occasionally in the letters to the editor (e.g. *The Advocate* 3/10/1996: 10).

Oddly, the appearance of young people in news items did little to challenge the belief that Tasmania is the best place for young Tasmanians. Although I imagined I would find considerable opposition to the 'keep youth at home' strategy among young people, instead I found qualified statements such as those of Katrine, a young Tasmanian who has recently returned:

Yet despite advocating the Island State as the place to live, she encourages young people to leave and gain experience at larger interstate centres. "I would insist that everybody leaves Tassie at some stage to go and work" she said. ... "I didn't appreciate Tassie until I left and worked elsewhere" (*The Examiner* 22/10/2000: 6).

Katrine insists on the importance of mobility, but primarily in terms of gaining the experience and skills that could assist Tasmania's economic development on returning home, and in terms of appreciating the lifestyle Tasmania has to offer. Ever optimistic, *The Mercury* views young people like Katrine as representative of a new breed of young Tasmanians:

Alison Wing, 25, science honours graduate and international fellowship winner, is one of that new and encouraging breed of young Tasmanians who believe the world beyond Bass Strait is only a training ground to prepare them for life in the environment they love best (*The Mercury* 4/7/2001: 18).

One notable exception to this approach was a feature article written by a young journalist from Tasmania living in Melbourne in which a young person spoke frankly about the advantages of life elsewhere and the disadvantages of staying at home (*The Mercury* 1/2/1999: 10-11):

Unlike many of her contemporaries, Heidi remains unenthused at the prospect of living in Tasmanian again. "Maybe I'd move back, though most likely not," she said (*The Mercury* 1/2/1999: 10).

One final aspect of my review of this narrative is to examine the way young people are classified within the narrative of 'keeping youth at home'. I have already observed that young people were depicted overwhelmingly in a positive light, for example, as assets to the

state. Another aspect of the classifying work undertaken by spokespeople and journalists was the tendency to downplay distinctions between those young people who leave and those who stay. This was evident in the persistent appeal to the generic category of 'young Tasmanians' (refer to quotes already cited above) and in labels that effectively reclaimed expatriates as 'Tasmanians who are yet to come back home'. For example, one spokesperson referred to this group as 'Tasmania's dispersed talent' and the 'State's diaspora' (*The Advocate* 18/2/2000: 3). When searching for my sample of new items, I also noted the publication of wedding photographs of young Tasmanian couples who had married on the mainland – indicating that island membership is not revoked on departure.

In summary, the narrative of 'keeping youth at home' is widely deployed in news items on youth migration. This narrative reflects governmental priorities and is articulated predominantly by politicians and business leaders, rather than young people. Its proliferation in Tasmanian media indicates that local debates about youth migration are both *parochial* in that they are centred on community interests and *paternalistic* in that they seek to address community decline and change through the management of young people. Although there are exceptions, for the most part journalistic representations do not challenge this view of young people. Instead, a particular type of young person (one who loves and misses her community) is enlisted in support of the community managers' assumption that ideally communities should stay the same, families should stay together and young people should stay at home.

### ***Narrative II: The best and brightest***

While youth migration debates in Tasmania in the late 1990s were marked foremost by an impulse to hold on to young people, on closer inspection I found the perceived crisis was not just about loss of young bodies per se, but rather the loss of the island's 'best and brightest'. In Tasmanian press coverage, I found that one of the main concerns articulated by spokespeople was the potentially damaging effect of a 'brain drain' on the local economy: that is, the loss of Tasmania's most educated, and specifically, computer literate youth. In deploying this narrative, journalists and spokespeople tended to abandon the generic description of 'young Tasmanians' in favour of a demarcation between skilled, educated and entrepreneurial youth and a shadow of less desirable — unskilled and unemployed — others.

The 'best and brightest' narrative was most clearly articulated in news items on the out-migration of graduates. While the 'keep youth at home' narrative was directed at

Tasmania's youth exodus, this second narrative focused specifically on Tasmania's 'brain drain':

People leaving Tasmania to seek jobs, fame and fortune interstate and overseas is nothing new...the "brain drain" caused by the lure of bright lights and bigger cities is a perennial issue for this island state (*The Mercury* 15/3/1997: 38).

News items on this phenomenon were easily tracked as journalists often used the term 'brain drain' in headlines and introductory paragraphs. For example: 'Brain drain halting just pipe dream' (*The Mercury* 30/3/1996: 5); 'Brain drain worry' (*The Advocate*, 8/5/2000: 7); 'Bacon says jobs boost eases brain-drain' (*The Mercury* 4/5/2000: 7); and 'Computer firm helping to plug Tassie's brain drain' (*The Mercury* 1/2/2001:2).

In the 'best and brightest' narrative, "It is not the size of the population that counts but the quality of the people" (*The Mercury* 15/3/1997: 38-40). Here 'quality' is measured in terms of people's academic credentials and the utility of their skills in the labour market.

According to local press coverage, Tasmania's 'best and brightest' is comprised of information technology entrepreneurs, science and technology university graduates and business managers. For example, in an article entitled 'The Peak of Success (But they just want to come home)', journalist Sharon Webb (*The Mercury* 23/10/1999: 37-8) profiles the 'Intelligent Island's lost potential' which comprises four 'young Einsteins' who achieved academic success in the fields of bio-genetics, chemistry and zoology. In this article, the lack of local work opportunities for the University's information technology graduates is also identified as a constant source of anxiety for graduates, politicians and university management. In other articles, politicians stressed the importance of attracting high-tech telecommunications businesses in order to 'lure' Tasmania's 'computer wizards' back home (*The Examiner* 28/2/1997: 8; *The Mercury* 30/10/1999: 18; *The Examiner* 22/10/2000: 5).

While the 'best and brightest' have many guises, their generic value lies in their capacity to generate investment or fill skills shortages in emerging industries. Again, the 'best and brightest' narrative is articulated predominantly by politicians (but also technical experts) who are interested mostly in the interests of the state, as opposed to the interests of a diverse youth population. As a liberal MP explains:

"Tasmania should be doing all it could to encourage them to bring home their skills to start new enterprises or boost existing companies."....."Our young people who have gone overseas and interstate can be attracted back when they have their own young families, or to fill the skills shortages the Government's own industry audits reveal" (*The Mercury* 18/12/2000: 12).

Here the 'keep youth at home' strategy is repackaged with an emphasis on skilled workers and university graduates:

The brain-drain of university graduates interstate is one of the major hindrances to the growth of the information technology sector in Tasmania. The newly appointed head of the Information Technology Council... said yesterday it was important to offer graduates a reason to stay. (*The Advocate* 28/10/1999: 6).

In summary, the 'best and brightest' narrative focuses attention on the loss of young people who have a skill, a talent or a qualification of benefit to the state. Although the portrayal of young brains and young achievers is important in challenging the negative stereotypes of youth that dominate popular media, the construction of *desirable youth*, inevitably entails the construction of *undesirable others*. Within this narrative the distinction between those who leave and those who stay is accentuated, as being recognised as a 'brain' or 'achiever' often entails achieving accolades elsewhere.

#### 2.4.4 Youth exodus on the North West Coast

While the two narratives discussed above — 'keeping youth at home' and the 'best and brightest' — are routinely cited within media commentary and conversations on the NW Coast, a more complex range of positions is articulated at this local level.

In general, media commentary on population decline and youth out-migration within the Coast's local newspaper, *The Advocate*, showed little variation from media commentary in Tasmania's Northern and Southern newspapers. Local reporters provided regular commentary on population growth statistics and the degree of decline within different settlements along the Coast; for example, 'Population loss in Mersey-Lyell' (*The Advocate* 28/8/1996: 5), 'People drain: Population growth in serious decline' (*The Advocate* 24/1/1997: 1) and 'Coast's population on downward spiral' (*The Advocate* 12/3/1998: 4). Moreover, similar sentiments about the need to keep young skilled and talented people at home were repeated in local news items. See for example, 'Taskforce to boost population' *The Advocate* 1/11/1996: 26; 'Losing our biggest asset' *The Advocate*, 25/1/1997: 4; 'Stopping graduate drain paramount' *The Advocate*, 28/10/1999: 6; 'Develop youth skills to stop exodus from State' *The Advocate*, 8/5/2001: 4; 'Future of region in hands of youth' *The Advocate* 20/7/2001: 4.). Perhaps, the major distinction between the NW and state-wide commentary on population decline and youth out-migration was that the economic and population crisis on the Coast was said to be even deeper and more difficult to address than

elsewhere in Tasmania ('Coast the big loser in population stakes' *The Advocate*, 21/2/2001: 3). As one southern reporter observed:

Tasmania's population drain gurgles loudest in the state's North-West ('Stopping the NW decline' *The Mercury* 11/3/2001: 7).

Looking specifically at the issue of youth exodus, the most notable example within the sample of NW Coast newspaper items was a full-page special (*The Advocate*, 25/1/1997: 4), which featured six articles about the out-migration of young people from the Coast under the banner 'the brain drain'. In the leading article the reader is presented with an expert commentator, followed by five smaller articles in which a young person who has left the Coast is profiled. Within this news feature, the journalist draws on the main narratives discussed above. For example, young people are forced to leave, the problem of population loss is linked to regional decline, and concern is expressed over the state missing out on the skills that these young people offer:

He's a Tasmanian and a success but the accolades came interstate. Brendon Gale describes Bass Strait as a barrier that takes courage to overcome and Tasmania somewhat of a comfort zone. The message is clear — leave the island if you want to be a high achiever. "It's a tough environment for a kid to grow up in with unemployment at a premium and precious little industry to support a young population." Wynyard-born Brendon is not insulting a home he appreciates for its beauty more each time he visits. He completed his Masters degree (Arts-Asian Studies) in July and started work with Melbourne-based information technology consultants last week. He left Tasmania at 19 to further another higher profile career. In both cases this State has lost out ('Gale, a force to be reckoned with' *The Advocate* 25/1/1997: 4).

Jane Delanty has it all before her...growing up in Burnie she became a member of the local musical society at 12 and was set on a path lined in footlights....Jane has worked as an extra on several Australian soaps and dramas. She has done an advertisement for Coca-Cola and one for Samsung. Maybe she'll become the face of Tasmania in the next State promotion. At least then her home-grown talent won't be a total loss to this State ('Acting up, on a wider and brighter stage' *The Advocate* 25/1/1997: 4).

In contrast to Sharon Webb's article on young people migrating from Tasmania's major city, Hobart (previously discussed on page 47), the NW reporter selects quite a different sample of young people. While Webb tends to focus on high flyers who performed



exceptionally at their local university and who have now secured international jobs, on the Coast the high flyers are less likely to be 'brainy' and are more likely to be 'talented', in the sense that they are sport stars or actors (e.g. Alison, Jane and Brendon), or ambitious and hardworking, in that they have gained cadetships or completed a degree and found work (e.g. Anne-Maree and Heath). The selection of these particular young people is consistent with a Coastal culture which celebrates success on the sporting field and pride in hard work. Looking across other news items, it is evident that education is not the primary vehicle for achievement on the Coast. For example, inserted in a front-page feature that celebrates the recent increase in Tasmania's historically low high school retention rate is a secondary article that toasts the success of a local boy, Adam, who has won Tasmania's apprenticeship of the year ('Adam opts for working life' *The Advocate* 21/1/2000: 1). As a young person who has achieved success outside the education system, Adam is presented as positive role model for the 31.1% of young Tasmanians who decided to leave school after year 10 in 1999. Adam's achievements are considered to be the "envy of many young people in the State" and his carpentry apprenticeship with a local business is the fulfilment of a "lifelong dream". The article downplays the NW Coast's low school retention rate (relative to both the nation and the state), and instead canvasses viable alternatives to staying on at high school.

During my fieldwork I also took note of the way these recurring narratives — 'keeping youth at home' and the 'best and the brightest' — are repeated, modified and challenged by young people, their parents, local politicians, business people, and service providers who work with young people. Not surprisingly, local politicians and business people were predominantly concerned with curbing the out-migration of young people and saw the solution largely in terms of creating new employment opportunities for young people in the area. They felt that the brighter young people would always leave their country towns, and instead their focus was on trying to create opportunities to encourage those young people who in the past would have stayed on the Coast and taken advantage of local opportunities. In contrast, educationists and youth service providers talked more about the opportunities and life experiences available to young people who leave their regional hometown. They outlined the services in place to support young people in making the difficult transition to leave the Coast as well their own efforts to encourage young people to take up opportunities elsewhere. And they spoke frankly about the barriers that deter young people from leaving the Coast such as: the strong family networks on the Coast; the lack of family friends and contacts outside the Coast; a family environment in which neither parents have travelled overseas or moved between regions; and the lack of personal resources. Notably,



educationists and youth service providers worked hard to dispel the 'best and brightest' myth in order to encourage all young people, not only those who have excelled academically, to take up opportunities beyond their hometown.

As previously stated, I also conducted interviews with seven parents. These parents were torn (to various degrees) between wanting to keep their children close by and wanting them to take up the opportunities offered elsewhere. One parent spoke of the difficulty of living apart, especially when her daughter had her first child:

MICHELLE: So what's been the hardest thing for you both as parents?

ANNE: I would say the hardest part now is having a grandchild and not being able to — like today I was talking to Sarah this morning and she's sick, if I was closer I would most likely give up my job to look after the baby so she could work. Having to put him into child care when you're around and could do it easily, that's probably the hardest. I mean I remember my Mum was there for me and if I had a really bad night with the kids I'd probably pack up and go to Mum's the next day. She'd look after the kids and I'd have a sleep (Mother, Devonport, 20/2/2001)<sup>5</sup>.

Despite the difficulties associated with trying to maintain relationships over long distances, all the parents I spoke to were proud of their children's achievements beyond the Coast. Some of these parents told me that they had always assumed that their 'bright' and 'talented' children would leave and that they actively encouraged their children to move away in order to pursue opportunities beyond the Coast (Mother, Devonport, 6/3/2001; Mother, Burnie, 7/3/2001; Father, Ulverstone, 7/3/2001).

In my interviews with young people, it was also evident that young people were aware that there was an expectation that they would someday leave the Coast:

MICHELLE: So how do you think your parents coped with you leaving the first time?

JOE: No they realised, they realised the circumstances. And I think they were more than happy to see us go out and have a look at the bigger world. See what it's like. They both did it and if we didn't do it, they'd sort of be a bit disappointed, you know, that we didn't get out and have a look. Yeah, have a look about and just experience life a bit (26 year old, Burnie, 1/6/2001)<sup>6</sup>.

---

<sup>5</sup> Following each quotation drawn from parent interviews, I provide information on the parent's sex (i.e. mother or father), the parent's current hometown, and the date of the interview.

<sup>6</sup> Following each quotation drawn from the interviews with young people, I provide information on the age of the interviewee at the time of the interview, their regional hometown, and the date of the interview. Further information about the interviewee is provided in Appendix A.

Through my discussions with parents, it became evident that one of the key problems for families is the high mobility of young people and the lack of mobility among their parents. While two of the parents I interviewed were open to the possibility of moving, the other five cited a range of reasons as to why they could not leave including their poor health, ageing, their inability to take on a higher mortgage on the mainland, their commitment to their small business, and the high quality of life and personal friendships they enjoy on the Coast:

MICHELLE: So you wouldn't think about perhaps in the future moving on, going to them?

CLAIRE: Yes, we have thought about that too if they stayed on the mainland, but once again if Luke, Tom and Sarah came this way they'd get the cheap accommodation, whereas if we leave here we're going to have nothing compared to what we've got here. Just cross the fingers that they'll come back (Mother, Devonport, 6/3/2001).

MICHELLE: So do you see yourself always being here or would you think of moving to the mainland to be with them?

GRAHAM: No, I reckon I'll be here now I'm getting on. And I've got my own business too, so for me to go away I would have to sell my business. You see I haven't had holidays for four years. I'm probably going to take a week off this year and go up to Queensland. Bit over work I reckon. But that means I've got to pay someone to do my work for me so it makes my holiday twice as expensive (Father, Ulverstone 20/2/2001).

The largest component of my fieldwork was the eighteen formal in-depth interviews with young people. While young people were largely unconcerned about the effect of youth out-migration on the Coast and expressed little interest in the need to encourage some of these young people to stay in the area, they agreed with the popular sentiment that the most talented of their peers tended to leave the Coast:

DAVID: I think probably the more intelligent people of any generation, the people who have more perspective on life, or who think about life a bit more deeply, they can sort of realise what's happening to their lives, rather than getting pregnant and work and not going. And they realise that there are hundreds, if not thousands, of opportunities how they can live quite happily anywhere in the world (19 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

However, David was keen to qualify this statement, noting that those who stay on the Coast often do so because they have not been presented with any alternative and they have not been encouraged to travel, learn and pursue their dreams:

DAVID: Not necessarily just intelligent people, but I think too people are really a product of their upbringing too, a lot of the time. People who are brought up in the poorer areas with parents who've perhaps aren't quite as forward thinking or whatever and they you know haven't instilled in their children the knowledge that they can do anything they want and they can be anything that they want. So since they've been born they've had instilled in them that this is life, it's hard, it's not exciting, but that's it. So people grow up with this ideal and we're not offered, well in the important years, in the high school years we're not offered many opportunities or um what am I trying to say, we're not offered any different perspectives on how to actually live our lives or whatever opportunities we have (19 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

In line with the 'best and brightest' narrative, a number of young people expressed the view that they felt some pressure to 'make it' and to achieve something beyond the NW Coast. They also suggested that regardless of what they achieved elsewhere simply the act of returning home was viewed as a sign of failure. As Fiona observes:

FIONA: I don't know why, it seems to be a thing, it's like amongst people my age — people who do have a career or are interested in having one, or who do have something in their lives apart from their families or drugs (which is what most people have got) — it's like coming back here is more of a failure thing. There's definitely that perception.

MICHELLE: Right. To make it you've sort of got to make it somewhere else.

FIONA: Yeah. And people I know who've gone say to me like "What are you doing there?". You know it's like ... I mean it's not a bad place, but if you want to do anything with your life really you can't really do it here (28 year old, Devonport, 23/1/2002).

Following the logic of the 'best and brightest' narrative, those who had left the Coast were able to draw a marked distinction between their peers who had left and those who had stayed. According to these young people, those who left are typically more intelligent, more adventurous, more ambitious, more outgoing, and more independent, whereas those at home are more family-orientated, less ambitious, less confident, more likely to be getting married and starting their own family, and more likely to be into drinking and recreational drugs. As Emma notes:

EMMA: One thing that was interesting when we got back, when a group of us caught up, we went through everyone from our year 12 class — the first person's already got married and someone's already had kids, someone's pregnant with twins, and some

guy's in rehab — we went through the whole list of everyone (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

Emma was not sure whether or not these differences between herself and her former classmates are simply a case of different life choices or the product of the conservative culture in which they were brought up:

EMMA: And, yeah, it's just really unusual to see the way things turn out. Yeah, but none of my friends are into that next life stage I guess you'd say. One of them is coming close, the one with the house, but that's about it. She's one of those people who you know born, raised, living on the Coast I'd say. Um which there's nothing wrong with that, not everyone has to race off and do things, but she's pretty content with where she is, which is good for her (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

EMMA: I don't know if that's too much of a generalisation, but um like parents over there [the Coast] are more strict, and holding back. Um it's like people are just scared to do anything a bit different, say anything a bit different, because everyone knows each other so it will get back to someone. So yeah, it's just holding back I mean and they're shy and yeah it just does, it bothers me because my friends are not going to reach their potential in what they want to do because talking to them they say oh yeah "I'd like to go and do this", but they won't do it because what will people think. So the culture is conservative and based on what other people think, which shouldn't happen (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

Though she champions their choices ("good for her"), she also worries that they have not had the same opportunities she had ("it bothers me because my friends are not going to reach their potential").

While many of the young people I interviewed associated problems such as teenage pregnancy, drug addiction, youth unemployment and boredom with life on the Coast, those who had left tended to generalise this experience to all 'those who stay', while those who stayed felt these problems were community issues, which had not affected them personally, and that such issues were certainly not unique to the Coast.

## 2.5 SUMMARY

In this second chapter, I specified an analytical framework for studying the discursive aspects of regional youth migration, and I applied this framework to my study of youth migration on the NW Coast of Tasmania. I began by tracing the way in which the phenomenon of youth mobility has been classified by past and contemporary social scientists. This was important in terms of situating my research project within the tradition of youth mobility research, and in terms of situating present debates about youth out-migration on the NW Coast within a long history of concern about rural de-population and youth mobility.

In regards to social scientific research on youth mobility, I found that attention had largely focused on demarcating migrant behaviour and updating past classifications of migrant types, rather than attending to the question of how and why particular types of migration behaviour comes to be valorised or demonised. The use of historical, discursive methods, as opposed to surveys and questionnaires, enabled me to step away from this routine task of classifying what is going on 'out there', and instead focus attention on the contours of youth migration debates in Tasmania, and the way these narratives had been redefined and reinscribed by people on the NW Coast. Here I identified some continuity between the portrayal of youth migration debates in the past and the present. For example, just as Saville (1957) observed that rural depopulation debates in the nineteenth century were dominated by a conservative, preservationist view of the rural community, I found that the narratives that prevailed in Tasmania centred foremost on protecting community interests, rather than enhancing opportunities for young people. Also, much of the rhetoric associated with concerns about a 'brain drain' in the 1960s, continued to frame present youth migration debates in Tasmania. However, I also found that people in regional towns along the NW Coast were employing these narratives, albeit in many various ways, to order and frame their own understanding of youth migration. Such findings act as an important brake on attempts to extend the social scientific program of classifying migrant types. My research indicates that employing new post-modern labels merely obscures the continuities between various historical and geographical sites in which youth mobility has received heightened political attention, while simultaneously simplifying the complex circumstances in which various debates about youth migration are formed. Based on my research, I suggest that those who seek to typologise and classify, but who then fail to account for the social origin of particular classifications, are implicit in the construction of hierarchical classifications. For example, Jones' (1999b: 156) "trailblazers" and "pathfollowers" can be easily viewed

along a continuum of good-bad migration behaviour depending on the socio-political context in which such classifications are enunciated.

In regards to the case, I found that the portrayal of youth migration debates in Tasmania in general tended to be parochial, in that such debates centred on community interests, and paternalistic, in that such debates sought to address community decline and change through the management of young people. Specifically, I identified two recurring narratives within Tasmanian press coverage. The first narrative I termed 'keeping youth at home' as this narrative promoted the notion that ideally communities should stay the same, families should stay together, and young people should stay at home. In contrast, the 'best and brightest' narrative focused attention on the loss of young people who have a skill, a talent, or a qualification of benefit to the state. Within this second narrative the distinction between those who leave and those stay was accentuated, as being recognised as a 'brain' or 'achiever' often entailed achieving accolades elsewhere. Both these narratives reflected governmental priorities and were articulated predominantly by politicians and business people, rather than young people. I also documented people's reception and use of these narratives on the NW Coast. I found that the employment of these narratives was not uniform across the community, instead some drew on and reinscribed these narratives, while others sought to challenge and redefine these narratives.

Overall, the research presented in this chapter indicates that discursive analysis is valuable in drawing out new aspects of youth mobility; that is, the way this phenomenon is constructed and problematised in particular contexts. Such analysis, however, cannot provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of regional youth migration as experienced by young people, their families, and their local community. In order to do so, I also need to account for the policy strategies and social norms that circumscribe young people's movements, as well as young people's experiences of socio-spatial mobility. In the next chapter, I begin to address this gap by presenting an analysis of the governmental aspects of regional youth migration.

## *Chapter 3*

### **STATE AND NEIGHBOURHOOD INTERVENTIONS IN THE MANAGEMENT OF YOUTH**

governance ♦ rationalities ♦ population ♦ transitions ♦ policy ♦ unemployment ♦ education

#### **3.1 CHAPTER PLAN**

In this chapter, I present a governmental analysis of regional youth migration. This analysis is a product of my interest in shifting the analytical gaze of youth mobility research from a technical focus on migratory patterns to a governmental focus on the management of populations and young people. Such an approach reflects the recent surge of interest in governance among sociologists, largely due to Michel Foucault's influential work on governmentality. Having detailed the discursive terrain of youth migration, the aim of this second analysis is to draw attention to the ways in which the issue of regional youth migration was managed and the ways in which regional young people were governed in Australia in the 1990s. It is also important in setting out the normative order which young people operate within, and which influences the way young people see themselves and others. In this sense, the work presented in this chapter is viewed as one critical aspect of describing and making sense of youth out-migration on the NW Coast of Tasmania.

This governmental analysis of regional youth migration represents the second of three empirical studies and it is divided into four key sections: an analytical framework for studying 'youth, mobility and governance'; an overview of my research methods; the results of my analysis of policy programmes and community initiatives aimed at managing youth migration; and a summary of the chapter. Within my analysis, I chart two trends, the emergence of high levels of youth unemployment in the early 1990s and growing disparities between urban and regional economies in the late 1990s, and I examine governmental responses to these issues at the national and local level. On the Coast one solution to this complex set of issues was the expansion of educational opportunities for young people through the establishment of a university campus. The case is instructive in that it demonstrates the consequences of regional intervention in the historical compact between the nation and its citizens, and, as such, it is indicative of the contemporary experience of



many young people living in disadvantaged regions such as the Coast who find themselves subject to multi-layered and often contradictory attempts to manage and order regional life and young people's lives.

## **3.2 YOUTH, MOBILITY AND GOVERNANCE**

Throughout section 3.2, I discuss sociological literature that has assisted me in the formulation of a governmental analysis of regional youth migration. A governmental approach is viewed as not only complementary with the discursive analysis undertaken previously, but a necessary aspect of my three-way approach to making sense of the social world. I introduce this section with a general overview of sociological research on governance, including three distinct approaches that are derivative of the work of Karl Marx, Max Weber and Michel Foucault. I then sketch historical shifts in the governance of young people and mobile populations, and I examine the treatment of issues of governance and social control in existing accounts of youth mobility. Here I revisit the three research sites examined in chapter two, nineteenth century accounts of rural de-population and industrialisation, twentieth century (post-war) accounts of the international migration of tertiary educated professionals, and recent accounts of youth transitions.

### **3.2.1 Authority and governance**

The exercise of authority is a central problematic in the social sciences. On this topic, sociologists have taken a rather catholic approach, in that they have not only attended to the operation of formal, judicial and political power, but they have also attended to the social control of workers by big business, and the ways in which cultural conformity is induced through customs and traditional practices. As such, there are many entry points into the study of authority and governance. While my review is suggestive of this rich and diverse field, the discussion centres on recent developments, namely the influence of Michel Foucault's iconoclastic governmentality lecture on contemporary sociological inquiry. Here I examine the articulation of Foucault's work as both a disruption to and extension of writings on authority and governance in Australian sociology, which to date have been predominantly influenced by Marxist and Weberian sociology. I begin with an examination of authority and governance before Foucault's work surfaced in Australia, and before the rise of neo-liberal rationalities across Western nations. Here I focus on the influential writings of Bob Connell, and Sol Encel, who were among the first scholars to articulate a critical (Marxist) and sociological (Weberian) interpretation of Australian political life. The

aim of this section is to outline classical and contemporary approaches to the study of authority and governance, before embarking on a discussion of governance in relation to young people and mobile populations.

### ***Capital domination and hegemony***

Bob Connell's interpretation of class relations and the operation of power in Australian society marks a critical turning point in the development of Australian sociology, and remains an important resource for contemporary students of authority. Connell's (1977) exposure of the capital edifice of Australian society is detailed in his analysis of Australia's ruling class culture, his historical account of class relations in Australia, which he undertook with Terry Irving (Connell and Irving: 1980), and his research on education and inequality (Connell 1982). As an active public intellectual, Connell responded to the contemporary political events that surrounded him, such as the anti-Vietnam War demonstrations and the dismissal of Whitlam's social reformist government, by asking why these radical counter-movements had been so easily stifled and why promises of progressive social reform had been curtailed in Australia. In responding to these questions, Connell borrowed heavily from neo-Marxian writers such as Herbert Marcuse, Louis Althusser and Antonio Gramsci, who had begun to focus attention on the cultural and psychological aspects of power and social control (i.e. through theories of socialisation, ideology and hegemony).

Connell and Irving's (1980) depiction of Australian society is classically Marxist in that they portray Australian society as dominated by the logic of capital accumulation and based on class antagonism. However, more controversially, they suggest that Australia is a 'laboratory of hegemony' due to its historically low levels of industrial unrest and class conflict (See Austin 1984: 16). They argue that although Australia's working class has struggled in the past (particularly in the 1890s), it is now largely incorporated into a ruling class culture; one that endorses individual competition and promotes the notion that national economic growth is in the interests of everyone, including working class Australians. In his earlier work *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture*, Connell (1977: 51) defines the ruling class as those who own the means of production, that is, company owners and entrepreneurs, and those who "live off profits generated by property" such as company managers, landlords and shareholders. Although Connell recognises the correspondence between private capitalists and governmental bureaucrats, he insists that private capitalist interests play a primary role in specifying the direction of Australia's economic and social development. This distinction is reflected in his clarification of the term 'ruling class':

The phrase 'ruling class' does not imply 'rule' in the sense of executive control (no one, and no group, rules a capitalist society in that sense). What is implied is a collective domination, the maintenance of an institutional structure within which the class appropriates benefits, the choking off of alternatives – the only sense in which a *class* can intelligently be said to rule' (Connell 1977: 58).

Connell's analysis of class relations is notable in terms of its originality and its intellectual scope, and its contribution to sociological practice in Australia. Such an ambitious and controversial thesis, however, is necessarily subject to criticism and revision. I do not propose to offer a comprehensive critique of *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture* as the time for such a debate has certainly long passed. Instead, I briefly outline three central criticisms in order to demonstrate the differences between Connell's Marxian approach to the study of authority, and other, Weberian and Foucaultian, interpretations. The Marxian framework that Connell advocates has been criticised for its inability to accommodate many of the historical conditions associated with the Australian case, particularly in relation to the proposed model of the Australian state as relatively weak and bourgeois, and the emphasis on class and property as the primary source of inequality (Austin 1984). Connell's account of a 'ruling class-working class' Australia downplays the unique economic conditions presented by colonisation, the prominent and independent role of the state in Australia's economic development, and the state's responsiveness to various regional and sectoral interests. It also falls short in relation to the presence of social inequalities in Australian society that are not based on class, namely the marginalisation of indigenous Australians (Austin 1984: 6). Moreover, the applicability of the hegemony thesis to the Australian case is questioned to the extent that Connell abandons Gramsci's subtle version of hegemony as a 'war of position' in favour of a strong hegemony thesis that charts a fairly dogmatic, pre-determined course of class-based socialisation in which Australian workers and their children blindly follow. Finally, the privileged role that Connell ascribes to the intellectual in articulating a counter-hegemonic position and agitating for social change looks in retrospect idealistic and problematic, particularly in the light of Foucaultian inquiry which has drawn attention to the blurred boundaries between knowledge and power.

Connell's account of class and inequality in Australia represents an important challenge to the ever-popular, but largely misguided view of a 'fair go' society. The post-War Australia that Connell depicts is a society governed by the logic of capital accumulation and imbued with an ethos of individual competition and progress. Connell's utilisation of neo-Marxian theory in his study of power, authority, class and inequality in Australia was heralded as an important theoretical advance within Australian sociology at the time, and his 'ruling class'

model, albeit a more simplified version, has since become a standard reference point in popular media. One of the strengths of Connell's work is that in following networks of collusion between a ruling class and a ruling culture he traces operations of power that extend from Australian boardrooms, to the press club, to the union's negotiating table, and into the classroom. However, while Connell's account is appealing in that his ruling class has prevailed in repeated junctures in Australian history, the more dogmatic aspects of the thesis — a stable hegemonic pact and a dominant ideology — fail to account for the complexities of the Australian case. The socialist counter-hegemonic solution suggested by the ruling class thesis is even more problematic given Connell's overly optimistic view regarding the independence of Australia's intelligentsia, the revolutionary potential of Australian workers, and the capacity of a socialist government to deliver a just and equitable system of governance.

### ***Authority and bureaucracy***

While Connell pioneered Marxian sociological inquiry in Australia, it was Sol Encel who pioneered sociological inquiry *per se* in an Australian context, most notably through his co-edited book *Australian Society: A Sociological Introduction* (1965). In contrast to Connell, Encel (1962; 1970) favoured a Weberian approach to the study of political life, which he applied specifically to the problem of government in Australia. While both researchers addressed issues of inequality in Australian society, Encel depicted a socially stratified society based on various statuses, rather than the divided (ruling versus working) class society found in Connell's work. Although Encel's major study on *Equality and Authority* (1970) received mixed reviews on its release, his early work (1962; 1970), as Australian sociologist Diane Austin (1984: 141) has previously noted, has been retrospectively recognised for its appreciation of the particular circumstances which marked Australia's historical development, its attention to the complexity and contradictory nature of governance, its sympathy towards the multiple dimensional nature of power and status, and, moreover, its contribution to the development of Weberian sociological inquiry within an Australian context. That said, Austin notes that many of the earlier criticisms of this work, particularly those put forward by Marxist scholars, still hold, and that Encel's methodological confusion in particular confounds and limits the scope of his research.

In the early part of his career, Encel was concerned with Australia's cabinet system and the Australian bureaucracy. Even within his first comparative study of Australia and Britain's cabinet systems, Encel (1962) began to articulate a sociology that was informed by institutional analysis and attuned to the unique historical and cultural milieu of Australian

politics. In this work, Encel demonstrates the inapplicability of the British model of cabinet to the Australian situation, which he notes is characterised by a federation of disparate states, a relatively unstable dual party system, a diffuse and demanding electorate, a system that places a premium on performance rather than inheritance, and a State that has not played a prominent role in international affairs. In short, the Australian State is particularly vulnerable to external pressure groups (Austin 1984: 144-145). He extends this interest in Australia's unique political system to an historical account of the role of governance in Australia's development (Encel 1970). Writing before Connell, Encel observed two decades of economic expansion in Australia, and unqualified support for the Keynesian interventionist approach to economic management by Australian governments. In view of this immediate experience and his research on the economic development of colonial Australia, Encel argued that the dramatic expansion of the public service in the post-War period, the 'bureaucratic revolution', was not new, but rather the consolidation of an already well-established pattern of governmental regulation and economic management (Encel 1970: 62-69). For Encel, the state was neither a passive instrument being manipulated by capital enterprises, nor a sideline supporter in its provision of social welfare, but rather Australian governments had, since the colonial period, played a prominent and distinct role in capital formation; for example, through international diplomacy and foreign policy, and in terms of responding to electoral constituents. Encel noted that while government decisions often favoured and coincided with the interests of developers, entrepreneurs and private property owners (Connell's ruling class), governments were also called upon to respond to the needs of competing regional and economic sectors, and multiple interest groups (Austin 1984: 182).

Unlike Australian sociology students today, Encel undertook his research in the absence of any home-grown sociological debate. Consequently, Encel looked to the classical writings of Weber to refine his method and intellectual project, to Australian economic historians such as Butlin to provide the context for his research, and to the positivist analyses of stratification in the United States as a model for measuring the distribution of power and status. Austin (1984) has previously provided a comprehensive critical appraisal of Encel's work, which is worth briefly repeating here. She notes a major shift in Encel's work from an approach that is consistent with Weberian sociology in its attention to historical and institutional analysis, to a less satisfactory stratification approach that is based on multivariate analysis. The end result is:

Instead of a study of conflict and differentials of power which we might expect to come from the pen of a political scientist or a sociologist of a Marxist persuasion, we receive instead a stream of data separated into categories that appear to bear very little relation to Encel's major theme, the role of state bureaucracy in Australian life (Austin 1984: 169).

For Austin, the promise of Encel's early work on culture and the economy is undermined by this positivist turn. The effect is a less comprehensive and less convincing account of equality and authority in Australia, and a far weaker counter-position to Marxian analyses:

... pristine class analysis will no more work for Australian society than a fascination with bureaucracy that destroys all thought of the class and labour-capital conflict which periodically racks Australian society (Austin 1984:178).

Austin (1984: 172-9) suggests that had Encel been more faithful to a Weberian analytical approach and clarified the issue of class without recourse to stratification measures, there might have been far more correspondence between Encel and Connell's research to the benefit of Australian sociology.

Encel made several astute observations of the Australian state that could not be extinguished despite the growing popularity of Marxian analyses in Australian sociology from the 1970s onwards. These include: the lack of a uniform class support base for either of Australia's two major political parties; the relative autonomy of the bureaucracy despite its routine correspondence with capitalist interests; the complex structure of the state apparatus and its contradictory policy responses; and the state's relative stability and endurance in the face of class conflict and change (Austin 1984: 147). In his more Weberian moments, Encel anticipated many of the themes examined by contemporary students of governance working within a Foucaultian framework, namely his vision of the state apparatus as complex, contradictory, and pervasive, and his recognition of the authoritarian consequences of bureaucratic encroachment.

### ***Reprise***

It is not surprising that the first major contributions to Australian sociology centred on authority and governance, mainly in terms of Australia's capital formation and political arena. In this sense, early Australian sociology reflects the main orientations of classic liberal political theory in its focus on the state and private property. This approach has been extended and challenged by feminist and post-colonial writers who have sought to restage the political around issues of identity and human rights (e.g. sexual identity and inequality,

environmental ethics, and indigenous rights and land rights), and by Foucaultian scholars who offer new histories and interpretations of Australian governance, as well as a revised view of the state as hybrid, contingent and improvised. As interest in Foucault's writing on governmentality has been particularly pronounced within Australian sociology (Dean 1999: 4), and as it represents the most dramatic break from classic political theory, I now turn to a brief summary of Foucault's governmental project, and I specify continuities and discontinuities with the Weberian and Marxian projects commenced by Encel and Connell.

### ***Governmentality***

In his now seminal 1978 lecture on *governmentality* delivered at the Collège de France, Michel Foucault (1978/1991) announced a simple project — an inquiry into the origins of governance. In doing so, he not only took aim at foundational concepts and assumptions in classical political theory, but also charted new vocabularies and new techniques for understanding 'how modern societies are governed' and 'how modern subjects are made'. The breadth of Foucault's line of inquiry is evident in his conceptualisation of government as the 'conduct of conduct', rather than simply the activities of political institutions. As Mitchell Dean (1999: 11) explains:

Government [defined as the 'conduct of conduct'] is any more or less calculated and rational activity, undertaken by a multiplicity of authorities and agencies, employing a variety of techniques and forms of knowledge, that seeks to shape conduct by working through our desires, aspirations, interests and beliefs, for definite but shifting ends and with a diverse set of relatively unpredictable consequences, effects and outcomes.

Foucault's work on authority and governance as formulated in his governmentality lecture and put to work in his studies of the treatment of madness, the French penal system, and his history of sexuality, has been granted extensive attention within critical social theory and has provided the basis for an emerging 'analytics of government' (Dean 1999) or a 'new sociology of governance' (Rose 1999a). Drawing on this ensemble of governmental analysts, I outline the major tenets of Foucault's governmentality in order to illustrate the discrepancies between past (Marxian and Weberian) and contemporary (Foucaultian) approaches to the study of authority and power in Australia. This discussion is important in clarifying the influence of Foucault's writing on my own analysis of the management of young people on the North West Coast.

As both Marx and Weber recognised, debates about authority and governance inevitably circle back to the question of power. Although Foucault explicitly rejected attempts to



theorise power and was critical of the conceptualisation of power as a thing which some use to dominate others – he did provide some insight into how he conceptualised power in his own work. In Foucault's *History of Sexuality* (1976/1978: 94-95) he advances several propositions in relation to power. To paraphrase:

- power is not something that one holds on to or allows to slip away; instead power is exercised from innumerable points, in the interplay of non-egalitarian and mobile relations;
- relations of power are not in a position of exteriority with respect to other types of relationships (economic processes, knowledge relationships, sexual relations), but are immanent in the latter;
- power is multi-directional (i.e. it is exercised on the dominant as well as on the dominated);
- power relations are both intentional and non-subjective (i.e. actors make calculated decisions; however, local actions are not necessarily coordinated and the consequences of such actions are not necessarily anticipated by the actors themselves).

Rather than assuming that power emanates from one particular source either the bourgeoisie or the state, Foucault instead describes a world in which there are “multiple circuits of power, connecting a diversity of authorities and forces, within a whole variety of complex assemblages” (Rose 1999b: xxi). The task of the analyst, therefore, is not to describe the essence of what constitutes modern government, but rather to describe the instruments and techniques by which populations are managed within specific historical domains.

Returning to that iconoclastic lecture on governmentality, Foucault (1978/1991) discusses the emergence of a particular form of government that appeared in Western European societies in the eighteenth century, but which had developed over a longer period. He draws particular attention to the displacement of religion from the sixteenth century onwards and the associated rise of the state in the eighteenth century, as well as the displacement of the model of the family as the target of government in the eighteenth century. Accordingly, Foucault presents two theses – one, that in modern societies political power is increasingly centralised and located in the state, and, two, that such political power has increasingly been directed towards the management of populations and individuals. For Foucault, these twin processes are suggestive of a fundamental shift from a society organised around *sovereign power* to a society organised around *disciplinary power*. Notably, Foucault insists on a history of continuity rather than revolution in the sense that Christian pastoral care and the family are both recognised by Foucault as critical technologies and instruments used in the education of individuals and hence the management of populations in contemporary society.

Another important aspect of Foucault's work is that despite his acknowledgement of the pervasiveness of the modern state, he insists that the state has captured the social analyst's eye for far too long. Instead, it is the second phenomenon — the intensification of regimes of discipline directed towards both the management of populations and the governance of oneself — which Foucault takes as his primary research interest.

The operation of disciplinary power is graphically illustrated in Foucault's earlier study of the French penal system *Discipline and Punish* (1975/1977) in which he examines punishment rituals, the daily regimes of prisoners, and the surveillance-orientated architecture of prisons. Within this account he emphasises the central role of the human sciences in mastering and improving the techniques by which prisoners are managed and disciplined (e.g. monitoring, recording of observations, and calculation). The social scientific techniques he describes such as 'hierarchical observation' and 'normalising judgement', however, are not limited to the treatment of criminals and criminality, but rather, for Foucault, they form the foundations of governmental management and self-monitoring in a society organised around discipline. For example, the refinement of statistical measures has enabled researchers to identify anomalies in the population, which in turn enables them to categorise people and target those who deviate from an abstracted norm. Again, Foucault anticipates absolute readings of his work and qualifies his analysis. In contrast to the totalitarian, pan-optical gaze of George Orwell's (1949/1965) *Big Brother*, Foucault did not see disciplinary power as all-encompassing and one-directional, but rather he insisted on both the persistent failure of regulatory measures, and the possibilities of resistance to such measures (Dreyfus and Rabinow 1983: 195).

Although Foucault disrupts classical theory, he should not be positioned in opposition to it. In many respects, Foucault extends the work of nineteenth century theorists in his analysis of the moral 'conduct of conduct', a central preoccupation of Durkheim, in his Weberian concern with rationality and bureaucratisation, and in his examination of the constitution of the subject within a complex power grid — a theme reminiscent of Marxian scholarship. Moreover, Foucault's work is not an abstract critique of others, but rather through his particular studies he illustrates how the study of authority and governance might proceed on an altogether different terrain. For Foucault, government is not the expression of political economic theories, but rather a complex activity comprised of pragmatic programmes and technologies.

While scholars are still in the process of mining Foucault's vast contribution, I argue that his work represents at least two major challenges to social scientific practitioners today. First, from Foucault we (social scientists) inherit a new history about ourselves, one in which we

are not participants in a noble programme of scientific endeavour at arm's length from the daily operations of the modern state, but rather our work is fundamentally implicated in the management of populations. Although such an insight might appear retrospectively rather simple, it has and continues to be overshadowed in the race to expand our knowledge about the social world and our techniques for uncovering this world. For most of us, it has been far easier to hold up to the light an abstract state peopled by grey suits and to critique the state for its failure to do the things informed and principled social scientists want it to do, rather than attending to our own role in marking out new problems and hence new spheres of government. Hunter (1994) has previously articulated and developed this argument in relation to education academics. Within his critique, Hunter describes the emergence of two educational personas that have been routinely posited as discrete and autonomous fields: the 'technical bureaucrat' and the 'critical, humanist intellectual'. Although the latter comes to see herself/himself as marginal and hence morally privileged to the state apparatus and its foot soldiers, in fact she/he is perfectly positioned to take up her/his role as the moral consciousness within the educational bureaucracy (Hunter 1994: 167). The consequence of this line of argument is not an end to social scientific analyses. Instead, the researcher is encouraged to position herself/himself within histories of public policy and governance, and to specify a far more humble, partial, and multi-faceted account of how public policy is achieved (Rose 1999a: 11). The second major challenge presented by Foucault's work is his insistence on the tenuous and fragile nature of government; that is, its inbuilt programme of governmental failure. For Foucault, government works through the problematisation of its own management strategies, and as such it is only through identifying social problems that new territories can be opened up to further management. In this sense, Foucault puts an end to both the utopian socialist's dream that perfect government is possible when the right people are in charge, and the liberalist dream that we might one day be free of government. As Nikolas Rose (1996: 323) observes:

... the value of studies of authority and subjectivity might be to enable us to weigh the costs and benefits, not of being freed from government, but of governing ourselves differently.

### **3.2.2 Governing (I)**

The three approaches outlined above specify different aspects of authority and governance in society, and when applied in an Australian context shed light on class relations in Australia, the nature of Australia's state apparatus, and the interstitial spaces between executive government and moments of governance in Australian society. These theories

are not complementary – although there is a large degree of correspondence between them – and as such it is not possible to pull these perspectives into a coherent analytical framework. However, each distinctive approach informs and is put to use in my analysis to varying degrees. While the case cannot accommodate the model of a ruling elite and a bourgeois controlled state, the lesson of Connell (and Marx) is to be attuned to the injurious nature of power and authority in a very unequal society. From Encel (and Weber), I take a complex model of state bureaucracy and the enduring methods of historical and institutional analysis. To a much greater extent than the proceeding study, I utilise the work of Foucault and, in doing so, contribute to the emerging field currently recognised as the ‘new sociology of governance’ (Rose 1999a) or a contemporary ‘analytics of government’ (Dean 1999). Although the writers who comprise this emerging field do not articulate a uniform or consistent voice, they do share a ‘working’ set of principles or orthodoxies about how this ‘new sociology of governance’ challenges classical political and social theory, and how this approach can be consistently applied across multiple empirical sites. The ‘emphases’ or ‘insistences’ that recur within these writers work include:

- *the inseparability between ‘governance of the self’ and ‘governance of social institutions and communities’* — they do not make analytical distinctions between the project of managing oneself and the project of managing national populations;
- *the multiplicity of political actors* — they reject the centrality of the state apparatus in political analytics, particularly in its conception as a tool of capitalist interests;
- *the outcomes and consequences of a range of governmental techniques* — they reject the attempt to explain why certain effects are produced and the attempt to attribute primacy to one cause above a plethora of co-emergent conditions — government itself is viewed as a practical accomplishment;
- *the tenuous, reversible, improvised and contingent nature of the activities of governing* — they argue that such activities and/or ‘regimes of truth’ are less stable and durable than assumed;
- *being sceptical and allowing for other possibilities* — they are concerned with questioning particular histories and discourses that are presented as timeless, natural, and foundational, and asking ‘how could it be otherwise?’;
- *language, knowledge and truth* — they are interested in the whole regime of enunciation, that is “what counts as truth, who has the power to define truth, the role of different authorities of truth and the epistemological, institutional and technical conditions for the production and circulation of truths” (Rose 1999a: 30).

- *Instruments, devices and technologies* — they are interested in describing the technical means by which governance is achieved, rather than searching for the essential characteristics of modern government.

### **3.2.3 Youth mobility and governance**

In the last chapter I examined the classifications deployed in accounts of rural de-population in the nineteenth century and the out-migration of university graduates in the post-war period, as well as contemporary accounts of youth transitions. In this chapter, I revisit these three periods in which the issue of youth mobility was granted heightened attention by social scientists, but with the intention of describing shifts in the explicit policy recommendations arising from social scientific critiques and advances in the techniques by which this phenomenon was analysed. For as Foucault (1978/1991) reminds us, it is improvements in techniques of statistical calculation and profiling that are at the heart of ever more efficient regulation and management of particular populations. In doing so, I follow the emergence of two specialised fields of social scientific expertise, regional studies and youth studies, as these fields have made the most substantial contribution to past and present attempts to manage the problem of regional youth migration. My review indicates that these fields are at cross-purposes in terms of their diagnosis of the problem and their subsequent recommendations. Such disciplinary contradictions are highly relevant to the experience of the NW Coast, where various stakeholders have sought to either contain youth out-migration for the benefit of the local community or to facilitate personal advancement for the benefit of individual young people in the 1990s.

#### ***Policy interventions in youth migration***

A governmental analysis of regional youth migration at first glance appears a rather odd contribution to contemporary social commentary. Public policy and public conversation within First World nations has for the last decade focused on international migration, in particular, on the need for more restrictive measures to keep the pressing masses of the Third World at bay. Ironically, as First World capitalists and governments have encouraged the removal of international trade barriers, the free flow of people has been largely discouraged, most obviously in relation to refugees who purportedly lack the skills and experience required to compete in a post-industrialised economy. In Australia, political campaigns have been won and lost over the issue of national 'border protection' and consequently policy development relating to international migration has largely overshadowed discussions of internal migration. Furthermore, there is no coherent internal

migration policy in Australia and no plans to formulate one in the near future. A closer examination of the issue, however, reveals that there is a high degree of interest in this political issue, particularly among regional communities, and there is a vast array of policy measures that indirectly facilitate particular migratory patterns. Moreover, calls by regional Australians to stem the outflow of people and revitalise regional settlements are not new, but rather they are repeated across all nations affected by intense periods of industrialisation and post-industrialisation. Given the persistence of this political problem throughout the industrial and post-industrial age, it is important not only to sketch the present grid of policy measures that pertain to regional youth migration, but also to sketch the development of governmental technologies relating to youth mobility. Accordingly, I return to the experience of industrialisation and rural de-population in Britain in the nineteenth century in order to trace the development and translation of policies centred on the management of youth mobility.

### ***Management of regional communities***

As highlighted in the previous chapter, in the late nineteenth century the out-migration of young people from rural villages was primarily conceived as a problem of rural decay, and early governmental and social scientific efforts centred on containing and reversing this phenomenon. In this section, I provide a more detailed picture of the development of public policy relating to rural de-population. Here I note a shift in policy measures from Britain's early Settlement Laws, which were designed to control the mobility of the poor in the seventeenth century, to the advent of industrial decentralisation strategies from the 1880s onwards, and to the expansion of agricultural subsidies throughout the war and inter-war period. In making sense of these policy shifts, I discuss the correspondence between policy-making and the expansion of regional studies and town planning in Britain. I also discuss the transportation of these ideas to Australia, and the subsequent constraints on these measures in the Australian context. I conclude by noting that from the late nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth century, the governmental infrastructure in which the issue of rural youth migration was framed and addressed was predominantly focused on the prospects of the region and the viability of agriculture, as opposed to the prospects of young people themselves.

Historians have noted that legal restrictions on labourers' movements were installed in England from the sixteenth century onwards through the implementation of poor laws, vagrancy statutes, and later settlement laws (Saville 1957: 10-11). These existing governmental technologies were easily adapted to the containment of rural outflows, and did

indeed enable the transfer of considerable numbers of labourers from industrial centres back to their rural villages throughout the nineteenth century. However, the gradual weakening, rather than strengthening, of the Settlement Laws from the eighteenth century onwards undermined hopes for a comprehensive reversal of rural out-migration. While there were vocal protests among rural interests over the demographic consequences of industrialisation, national administrators were largely preoccupied with addressing the immediate problems of health and housing associated with urban crowding (Sutcliffe 1980: 1-2), and with appeasing venture capitalists who demanded an steady supply of cheap labour (Saville 1957: 10-11). Responding to these calls to allow greater mobility among labourers, legislators introduced substantial reforms through alterations to the Settlement Laws in 1795, and later through the passing of the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834. These reforms resulted in the cessation of arbitrary removals and extended opportunities for resettlement to additional groups in the labouring population, and, in the absence of legislative barriers, the volume of rural out-migration reached a peak in the 1870s and 1880s (Saville 1957: 11).

With the easing of restrictions on internal migration and the continued swelling of urban populations, social reformers turned their attention to the host of problems presented by urban congestion in the late nineteenth century. Not only did reformers call for the improvement of housing conditions of workers and adequate sanitation, but in the shadow of revolutionary France they also expressed concern over the exploitation of the working poor and as such the potential for a rebellious uprising (Ratcliffe 1981: 26). This combination of reformist ideals found expression in the emergence of a town and country planning movement in the nineteenth century, which was later institutionalised through planning legislation (i.e. the Housing, Town Planning, etc. Act of 1909) (Ratcliffe 1981: 73). This movement was founded on the utopian planning visions of early philanthropists such as Robert Owen, George Cadbury and William Lever (Ratcliffe 1981: 26-29). These men promoted the notion of industrial decentralisation, and established new industrial complexes beyond the major industrial, urban centres. They sought predominantly to ease pressures on urban areas and enhance productivity through the provision of adequate housing and a pleasant environment for industrial workers. While the notion of industrial decentralisation was, rather ironically, resisted by rural interests, who did want to arrest rural de-population but not at the cost of polluting their rural idyll with industrial smokestacks (Saville 1957: 155-156), it was embraced and popularised in the writings of Ebenezer Howard (Ratcliffe 1981: 30-34). For example, Howard's 'Garden City', a place that encompasses the respective advantages of town and country, is modelled on the concept of an industrial village.



Notably, the technical solutions proposed by Britain's early town and country planners drew heavily on the major diagnoses of social change offered by European intellectuals, in particular the theme of lost community articulated by Auguste Comte (1830-1842/1974), Ferdinand Tönnies (1887/1974), and Emile Durkheim (1893/1964) in response to social disorder and the ascendancy of liberal individualism in post-revolutionary France, as well as Marx and Engels (1848/1965) warnings of the political consequences of the continued oppression of labour. These planning prophets also utilised the research techniques being developed within the emerging field of sociology. In regards to country planning, the regional survey work undertaken by Frédéric Le Play in his study *The European Working Classes* was particularly influential (Meller 1980: 208). Le Play provided an important model for the empirical study of community, and his formula of 'Place, Work, Folk' remains the cornerstone of the two modern, specialised fields of 'regional studies' and 'community studies'. The major distinction between these two fields being the ordering of the triptych, with proponents of the latter tending to reverse Le Play's original formula.

With the onset of war this idealistic and visionary approach to social reform and urban design gave way to more pragmatic approaches. Throughout the "catastrophic period" of 1914 to 1945 (Hobsbawm 1995), the problems of rural exodus and decline were addressed indirectly through governmental regulatory measures inspired by Keynesian economics. With the outbreak of war and the collapse of the New York stock exchange in 1929, the British government was faced with the problem of demand deficiency. Desperate to maintain agricultural supplies, government intervention was expanded through a combination of tariffs, quotas, and subsidies, and then further supplemented by the introduction of guaranteed prices during the Second World War (Saville 1957: 136-137). Another important governmental measures to arrest rural decline at this time was the provision of public allotments and small holdings to farm labourers (Saville 1957: 159).

From the 1940s onwards, there was a consolidation of the various approaches to rural renewal within the planning profession, and regional planning emerged as a specialised area within the town planning profession. The role of the regional planner, namely to achieve a more balanced distribution of population and industrial development, was formalised in the Barlow report (1940), the Committee on Land Utilisation in Rural Areas (or the Scott Committee report) (1942) findings, the Distribution of Industry Act (1945) and the Town and Country Planning Act (1947) (Ratcliffe 1981: 65-67). Although such reforms were put on hold for the duration of the war, they were later revived with the commissioning of a series of inquiries into the problem of regional imbalance or uneven development in the 1960s, and the establishment of regional councils in 1965 (Ratcliffe 1981: 67-68). The

legacy of these regional initiatives is evident in the regionally co-ordinated national planning framework installed in Britain today.

While British governance was for the most part directly transported to its Australian colonies, measures centred on rural de-population and internal migration were of no relevance to the advancement of European settlement in the nineteenth century. However, with the first signs of instability in Australia's lucrative agricultural industries during the Great Depression of the 1930s, and with the subsequent requirement for increased levels of military expenditure, the Australian Government turned to the Keynesian regulatory measures endorsed by Britain and the United States. These measures included export regulations, direct subsidies for producers, tariff and non-tariff protection, stabilisation schemes, rural credit, subsidised communication, transport, education and medical services, petrol price equalisation schemes, and tax concessions (Stilwell 1974: 161).

British town planning ideals were also exported to Australian soil in the early part of the twentieth century. While the problems of urban squalor and congestion were not of the same magnitude, Australia's early reformers were concerned with the overwhelmingly concentration of industrial development in a limited number of urban centres, and the problem of unchecked urban sprawl. Following Britain's lead, Australian planners and politicians of the '40s debated the issue of regionalism and industrial decentralisation. With the establishment of a Regional Development Committee in 1945, the nation was divided into regions and regional surveys were commissioned. However, with the defeat of the Federal Labor Government in 1949, national funding ceased and none of the states persisted with the program (Stilwell 1974: 153-4). While there were a number of inducements available to manufacturers who chose to establish their operations outside the major urban centres throughout the 1950s and 1960s, these were largely based on ad hoc bargaining between the State Governments and individual firms (Stilwell 1974: 154). In the 1970s, attention once again turned to policies of decentralisation under the leadership of Whitlam's Federal Labor Government (1972-75). Whitlam's Government oversaw the establishment of a Department of Urban and Regional Development, and during his short period in office funding was available for ambitious city and regional planning reforms. In this period attention focused on a number of potential regional centres of renewal and growth. In the South-East corner of Australia, these included Albury-Wodonga, the Port Phillip Region, and the Tamar Region (Stilwell 1974: 172).

While the issues of decentralisation and regional renewal have found favour in the post-war period, economic geographer Frank Stilwell (1974: 153-188) explains why policies of decentralisation have, for the most part, been relatively ineffective in Australia. He argues

that the present pattern of development persists as most producers are advantaged by the model of metropolitan dominance (a tendency that has been exacerbated with the internalisation of capital), Australia's inter-governmental structure favours centralist policies, and country political interests have failed to support decentralisation programmes. While the first is self-explanatory, the latter two require further explanation. First, Stilwell (1974: 186) notes that the "chief opponents of regionalism are the State Governments". As their priorities lie with inter-state competition, state governments are reluctant to jeopardise any future investment in their state by insisting that companies locate in particular zones. The states have also been reluctant partners in the implementation of Federal initiated regional policies. The establishment of Commonwealth-Local grants in the 1970s remain an important mechanism for circumventing the centrist tendencies of state governments. Secondly, Stilwell notes that while rural Australia's political representatives, the National (formerly the Country) Party, do favour programmes of rural renewal, they have not supported Federal decentralisation initiatives and its nomination of key growth centres. Stilwell attributes this to political self-interest as the party stands to lose support among those living outside the nominated growth centres, and it runs the political risk of an influx of industrial workers, most likely card-carrying Labor voters (Stilwell 1974: 159).

Despite the plethora of inquiries into regional policy and development over the past two decades (Beer 2000: 169), the policy constraints that Stilwell aired in the 1970s are largely unchanged. Ironically, as the political rhetoric of protecting regional Australians grew throughout the 1990s, both industrial decentralisation policies and agricultural tariff protection were scaled back. In contrast to earlier programs, the Federal Labour Government in the 1980s and 1990s redirected regional policy towards structural adjustment within regional industries and regional labour markets (Beer 2000: 183-188; Stilwell 1992). Two important legacies of earlier decentralisations policies, however, remain in place today: tied Commonwealth-local grants, and the establishment of government, mainly education, facilities.

### ***Management of youth transitions***

While rural youth migration was largely conceptualised as a problem for rural villages and regional planning was viewed as the solution from the late nineteenth century onwards in Britain, an alternative governmental infrastructure was simultaneously being developed around the more generic problem of adolescence and youth. In this section, I look back at the major policy measures installed in the nineteenth century, juvenile correction and mass education, for managing young people, and I note the transportation of these correctional

measures to Britain's Australian colonies. Having discussed the legacy of these policy measures in the twentieth century, I then turn to the way modern states have conceptualised and responded to the phenomenon of graduate mobility in the Cold War years, and the phenomenon of delayed independence in the 1980s. Here I discuss the correspondence between policy-making and the expansion of youth professionals, educationists, youth workers and counsellors, and the field of youth studies.

Youth historians have suggested that young people were marked out as a social problem from the eighteenth century onwards in industrial societies. While there is some contention over exactly when the category of youth first came to prominence, it is clear that there has been a dramatic shift in policy measures centred on youth in industrial societies over the past three hundred years (Bessant *et al.* 1998: 4-5). Focusing on nineteenth century reforms emanating from Britain and Europe, it is clear that much of the youth-based reforms of this period were orientated towards the expansion of existing corrective and disciplinary technologies. This is true of the two major, or at least the most enduring, reforms of the nineteenth century: juvenile correction, and universal schooling. In regards to juvenile correction, Bessant and her associates (1998: 11-12) outline the conditions in which idle young labourers came to be viewed as a problem by the state. They argue that increased 'moral panics' surrounding juvenile unemployment and increased levels of juvenile incarceration in the early part of the nineteenth century were not so much a product of more juvenile crime, but rather stemmed from both changes in workplace arrangements which saw an increased presence of young people on the street, and the strengthening of police powers throughout this period (i.e. the Metropolitan Police Act). With an influx of juvenile prisoners, authorities subsequently turned their attention to the problem of both reforming these special child criminals (unlike adults it was believed that their childhood innocence could be restored) and turning them into loyal and productive citizens. It is during this period of unprecedented levels of juvenile incarceration that the defining features, techniques, and treatments of modern criminology took shape. The second major youth-centred policy development of the nineteenth century was, of course, the introduction of universal schooling, which in Britain commenced in 1870. While others have provided a far more exhaustive discussion of the birth of the schoolroom (Jones and Williamson 1979; Meredyth and Tyler 1993; Hunter 1994), I note (following Jones and Williamson 1979: 62-63) that in Britain the provision of schooling was an important measure in addressing the interrelated problems of pauperism, moral disorder, and criminal activity. Both James Kay-Shuttleworth's 1832 report on *The Moral and Physical Condition of the Working Classes Employed in the Cotton Manufacture in Manchester*, which specified the social

consequences of an uneducated population, and the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, which recommended that the state intervene to raise the intellectual and moral condition of the poor, were critical to the formulation of education policy in Britain (Phillips 1985: 12-13).

In contrast to the issue of rural de-population, which had absolutely no resonance with colonial Australia, European strategies for reforming juvenile delinquents and disciplining its younger population were not simply exported to Australia, but rather Australia's penal colonies played a central role in the reformation of British youth. For example, the establishment of the Point Puer boys prison in 1834 at Port Arthur, Tasmania, was the first juvenile prison in the British Empire. Unlike the general convict population, the boys at Point Puer received basic education and some were taught a trade. Although convict transportation ended in 1853 (Robson and Roe 1997: 25), juvenile correction remained a central tenet of policy directed at youth. In the later part of the nineteenth century, the European vices of juvenile delinquency and street vagrancy surfaced in Australia. The spectacular economic growth associated with the gold rushes of the 1850s and the clearing of land for productive agricultural in the latter part of the century resulted in plentiful work and good wages for young workers, which in turn was said to have resulted in a series of 'moral panics' in the 1870s regarding what to do about the unruly behaviour of 'larrikins' on the streets (Finch 1993: 75-79).

While juvenile reform was installed early in the Australian colonies, the dominant policy response to young people in Australia has historically been the expansion of schooling (Bessant *et al.* 1998: 81). Throughout the early colonial period, education and training was available to young people, but it was provided by individuals or through existing institutions such as the prison, the orphanage, and the church (Phillips 1985: 11-12). Following the establishment of 'free, compulsory and secular' education in Britain in the 1870s, mass education was available in most Australian settlements from around the late 1880s onwards (Bessant *et al.* 1998: 149). Although Australia began to assert its national independence following the advent of federation in 1901, it continued to look to the parent state in regards to education reform. Accordingly, Australian administrators followed Britain's lead in extending universal schooling to secondary level between 1905 and 1915, and gradually raising the level of compulsory schooling (i.e. the leaving age) throughout the twentieth century (Bessant *et al.* 1998: 149). In the 1970s, the Federal Government embarked on ambitious reforms in the educational sector, including greater policy measures to ensure that educational was available to all Australian youth, particularly those most disadvantaged such as Aboriginal, isolated and rural, and working class youth, and it removed financial

barriers to tertiary study through the abolition of university fees. In the past two decades, the expansion of schooling has continued through the availability of more university places, and the expansion of the vocational training sector.

Of course, youth policy has proliferated well beyond juvenile correction and schooling in Australia, as it has across advanced industrial nations. Currently there are a range of policy measures that affect young people such as taxation, social security provision, media policies, and health provision, there are youth specific policies and bureaucratic divisions dedicated to the development of youth policy, and there is a complex infrastructure of youth professionals, educationists, sociologists, psychologists, social workers, and medical practitioners, who are paid to observe, research, counsel, discipline, and ideally improve conditions for young people. While this apparatus has developed over the past century, youth studies is a relatively new field in Australian universities, with youth-specific research institutes having only been established in the past two decades. For example, the Youth Research Centre at the University of Melbourne, Youth Affairs Research and Development at RMIT University, and the Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies at the University of Tasmania. In view of this complex and multifaceted youth infrastructure, Bessant and her associates (1998: 77-80) provide a useful summary of the major orientations in contemporary youth policy. These orientations are derived from different conceptualisations of young people: as victims or a social problem (e.g. juvenile correction, social welfare), as a national resource (e.g. education and training, including military training), as future leaders and the future generation (e.g. investment in cultural and sporting activities), and as a political force (e.g. youth boards, committees and political organisations).

Returning to the central problematic of regional youth mobility, I suggest that the proliferation of youth professionals over the past century has had a marked effect on governmental attempts to contain young people's movements. In the previous chapter, I discussed two key examples when young people's mobility came under increased scrutiny: first, in response to concerns about graduate mobility in the Cold War years, and second, in response to concerns about delayed transitions from the family home to independence from the 1970s onwards. In regards to graduate mobility, I noted in the last chapter that a rich array of social scientific techniques was brought to bear on the matter. Consistent with nineteenth century concerns about retaining workers' skills and hence the rural village's viability, the impetus for this research was largely related to concerns about retaining the skills of young people in which the nation had invested so heavily, or attracting those students and their skills back to the home country in order to secure a competitive edge in

the new post-industrial order. In short, the problems of rural-urban migration and international graduate migration were both conceptualised principally from the perspective of national bureaucrats and regional politicians, as opposed to the young labourers and the young scientists themselves (e.g. Chorafas 1968). However, as interest in international graduate migration grew, it is clear that researchers gradually shifted these political prejudices; possibly they too would be tempted by lucrative scholarships, modern facilities and large research budgets (e.g. Beijer 1969). The researchers of the 1960s drew on all the crude social scientific methods of previous generations, observation, documentation, and classification, but with improved resources and institutional backing. As such, they were able to generate comprehensive and internationally comparable databases on graduate movements. Moreover, they drew on the most popular psychological and medical theories of the day. Here they moved from the task of describing the mobile population, to trying to understand what motivated a subject to migrate. Within the literature, there is a rather schizophrenic series of findings and recommendations as the researchers tried to formulate advice based on what is best for the nation and what is best for the science graduates (e.g. Musgrove 1963; Beijer 1969).

While the issue of graduate mobility illustrates an increasing tension between two specialised fields, regional studies and political economy versus youth studies and social-psychology, youth mobility today is predominantly addressed within the confines of its own disciplinary field. The key example here is the comprehensive and up-to-date work of Gill Jones (1995, 1999a, 1999b) on youth transitions and leaving home (See also Looker 1997; Molgat 2002). Jones (1995) points to the key changes in young people's transitions from dependent children to independent citizens from the 1970s onwards. She observes that the phenomenon of extended adolescence was problematised in the late twentieth century as many observers, typically baby-boomers, took it for granted that the type of transitions they had experienced in the 1950s were normal (and, in effect, right). Taking a longer range view, the 'compressed' transition associated with the 1950s, whereby young people left school, gained work, left home, got married and bought a house all in a relatively short period of time, appears as an anomaly. Focusing on her work on young people leaving home in the Scottish borders region, she speaks to and draws on a burgeoning literature on youth transitions<sup>1</sup>. Within this literature researchers typically begin by addressing one aspect of the youth transition, say from school to work or from the family home to the independent household, but then argue for a holistic approach, which recognises and

---

<sup>1</sup> Wyn and White (1997: 94-119) provide a summary of this literature.



accommodates the complex interrelation of all these transitory processes. In contrast to the quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews on which graduate migration research was based, Jones examines young people's socio-spatial biographies in order to capture the complexity of young people's lives and this period of transition.

Over the past decade youth researchers who study youth transitions have focused their attention on how the transitions they observe relate to or inform wider theories of social change (Wyn and White 1997; Jones 1995; Wyn and Dwyer 2000; Molgat 2002). As highlighted in chapter two, they have drawn explicitly on the complementary work of Giddens (1991) and Beck (1992), utilising Giddens' framework of the declining importance of traditional institutions in the construction of identity and self-hood in the late-modern age, and Beck's notion of risk, that is, once biography-making is detached from traditional institutions and open to a complex range of experiences, the individual biography-maker is subject to a greater assortment of individual risks. Their contribution to date has been to test these theories of social change with empirical evidence (i.e. Are youth transitions more complex and multi-faceted today?), to provide a more detailed and accurate picture of contemporary youth transitions, and to call attention to the need for greater state assistance in making the transition from adolescence to adulthood far smoother than it has been in the past. In this sense, the problem of youth migration has become unhinged from the fate and the study of the regions or the regional community. Instead the community is examined with specific regards to what it reveals about the identity of the young person (Jones 1999a).

Knowledge of young people and improvement of young people's lives is the absolute focus of these radical and principled youth professionals today. Wyn and White's (1997: 148) declaration exemplifies this professional stance:

Every young person is entitled to the respect of others and to the recognition of their inherent worth and dignity as human beings. This demands that there be systematic institutional support and material resources committed to this end.

In making such a demand, youth researchers illustrate their continued inability to grasp and take account of their own position within the process of public policy making. Reminiscent of Hunter's (1994) account of the relatively arbitrary separation between the 'technical bureaucrat' and the 'critical, humanist intellectual' within the field of education, youth researchers have tended to position themselves as the marginalised and yet morally privileged voice within the terrain of youth policy. For them, the state is not hybrid, contingent or improvised, but rather a complete system that has failed to realise its own principled commitment to young people's rights.

### 3.2.4 Governing (II)

The problem of regional youth migration is a relatively old one in nations like Britain, but a new phenomenon in late-industrialising countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. While there is remarkable consistency in the diagnoses offered and the measures proposed by nineteenth century experts and among contemporary regional communities, times have changed. In contrast to the British experience, regional communities face the distinctive challenges presented by post-industrialisation rather than industrialisation, and, moreover, the proposed solutions of regional experts run counter to the aims of specialists in youth training and management, a group whose political voice has expanded considerably over the past century. In tracing the emergence of regional studies and youth studies as discrete spheres of expertise I have traded off the complexity of these literatures to illustrate to the reader some of the present confusion in public discussions and public policy relating to regional youth migration. In pulling out these particular examples of social research on youth mobility, I do not wish to suggest a straightforward transition from one to the other or that the study of youth mobility has improved and evolved through greater attention to young people. My review has, however, drawn attention to tensions between the professional knowledge and the political agenda of regional experts and planners in comparison with youth experts and educationists. While regional studies offer a detailed picture of the economic performance of regions and the consequences for regional communities, youth studies offer a detailed picture of youth and their behaviour.

In undertaking a governmental study of youth migration, my intention is to contribute to the existing wealth of social scientific data and analyses being undertaken in regional and youth studies. However, in contrast to previous work, my assumptions about how governance works are indebted to Foucault's writings or the 'new sociologies of governance' and, accordingly, within my account of the management of regional youth migration on the Coast I avoid the temptation to be the morally privileged 'critical, humanist intellectual' offering guidance on how life might be easier for young people on the Coast — for as well-intentioned as such a role is, it is insulting to the long history of local, community, regional, parental, national, peer and private sector investments of money, time and thought on this issue — and instead, I try to bring to light some of the contradictions, complications and policy cross-purposes that plague present attempts to manage regional youth migration on Coast.

Having charted various approaches to the study of governance, I now specify the data sources, collection methods and techniques on which my findings are based.

### 3.3 RESEARCH METHODS

The study of how populations and particular people are governed is not a straightforward process. As many theorists have argued, subjects are governed in multi-faceted ways. While particular forms of governance and the effects of such governance can be traced through empirical observation, such accounts are always partial and enmeshed within further strategies of management and control. The aim of my analysis then is not to expose all forms of governance at once, but rather to trace those interventions that promised to shape and transform young peoples lives in the 1990s. I was particularly interested in governmental interventions and programs that aimed to address regional youth unemployment and out-migration on the Coast.

The research method that I adopted in this second study is best described as an historical analysis of events (Babbie 1999: 301-307). Babbie (1999: 306) notes that this method relies principally on extensive research and the corroboration of multiple sources, and that the aim of this method is to compile an account of past events that may confirm or challenge existing knowledge of those events. In accordance with this approach, my analysis is based on a systematic review of newspaper articles, as well as materials I collected throughout the duration of my three-year project, including historical documents, policy reports, secondary statistical data, and insights obtained through interviews with service providers and young people. In contrast to the analysis presented in the previous chapter, I used newspapers as a record of historical events, rather than as a record of public discourse. For example, I used newspaper articles to reconstruct events surrounding the introduction of particular policy interventions, to follow the rationales presented by those advocating such interventions, and to trace the views of various managers of young people (i.e. community leaders, youth workers, local business interests, and local, state and federal governments).

The collection of data involved three key stages. First, I conducted a general background search. I was able to reconstruct key events and policy initiatives on the NW Coast through a review of historical documents, policy reports, and local press coverage. For newspaper articles, I sampled every newspaper in every second month of the year between January 1990 and November 1999 (1,840 newspapers in total). I did not read the newspaper from cover to cover, but instead focused on front-page stories and the daily editorial. This general background search provided me with an overview of events on the NW Coast in the 1990s, and enabled me to identify key policy programs centred on containing youth unemployment and youth out-migration. In the second phase, I focused my data collection

and reading on what appeared to be the most ambitious governmental intervention in young people's lives on the Coast in the 1990s: the establishment of a Coastal university campus. Using the 'Tasmania online' database I was able to search for additional articles related to this issue. My combined sampling strategy generated 74 relevant articles, which subsequently formed the basis of my analysis. Finally, I returned to my interview transcripts as these transcripts provided a record of parent and young people's attitudes towards, and their experiences of, this major governmental initiative.

### **3.4 MOBILITY AND GOVERNANCE ON THE NORTH WEST COAST**

In this section, I chart the management of young people throughout their post-compulsory schooling years (over 16 years) on the Coast in the 1990s. I open this analytical section with a discussion of the political and economic context in which new governmental interventions were formulated and deployed. Here I provide an overview of life on the Coast in the late twentieth century, including the economic crisis and the cultural transformation that took place on the Coast during this period, I outline the shift in national policy priorities and tactics, and I chart the growing interest in the Coastal population among national political reformers during this period.

Having provided some background to my analysis, I then examine the key local and national governmental initiatives that were directed towards managing young people's transitions from school to work, and from the Coast to more economically prosperous cities and regions during the early 1990s. I review several policy initiatives in this period, including the Federal Government's employment strategy, *Working Nation* (Prime Minister of Australia 1994), the State Government's *Population Taskforce* (1996), and local promotional campaigns, before looking in greater detail at one of the most ambitious governmental interventions in young people's lives on the Coast in the 1990s — the establishment of a Coastal university campus. In my analysis, I focus on the campaign to secure funding for the development of the NW Study Centre and the crisis over securing university placements once the Centre had been built. Within this account, I highlight the various priorities, contributions and expectations of different players, including federal, state and local politicians, educational bureaucrats, teachers, parents and young people themselves.

From this local perspective, I reflect on the limits and capacities of managing youth mobility through education. I note that policy reforms are typically circumscribed by existing vocabularies and competing rationalities and interests, and that on the Coast this was most evident in the submersion of regional priorities centred on containing youth migration in favour of national priorities centred on the personal development and advancement of individual citizens. In conclusion, I observe that, while the campus promised to resolve these contradictory objectives by enabling young people to get an education and stay at home, in practice studying at the local university merely delayed the inevitable move, or it meant staying in the local area and redefining the culture of the Coast.

### **3.4.1 Rationales for governmental intervention in young people's lives**

Trying to pinpoint the reasons behind particular governmental interventions is complicated by the observation that modern states do not typically operate in accordance with a singular motive or logic or in response to a unitary, contained problem. It is, however, possible to document the circumstances in which there was an outbreak of concern for young people on the Coast in the early 1990s, and to sketch the prevailing 'mentalities' or 'rationalities' that circumscribed governmental activities at both the national and state level in the late twentieth century. Such a discussion provides insight into how young people from the NW Coast came to be problematised by national and regional managers in the 1990s, and the climate in which particular managerial solutions and strategies were formulated.

#### ***Life on the North West Coast in the late twentieth century***

Tasmania's saga of high unemployment is so gloomy that there is an irresistible urge to see whether the figures have any redeeming features. So far as last month's statistics, released on Thursday, are concerned, there are almost none. ... the North-West Coast still has the highest jobless rate in Tasmania, and it is only logical to fear that it is the worst in Australia as well (Editorial, 'The victims we had to have?', *The Advocate*, 16/9/1991: 6).

On the Coast, the national recession of 1991 marked the beginning of an extended period of employment contraction and factory closure in the manufacturing and processing sector (ABS 1990-1999), and a long wait for much-needed investment in the new industries of tourism and human services. Although the Coast had endured some economic instability and episodes of high unemployment over the past two decades, these short-term fluctuations did not compare with either the depth of the economic downturn in the early 1990s or the breadth of the cultural transformation that took place during this period. In the 1980s the Coast stood as a community united by work, family and a shared way of life; however, by

the early 1990s the Coast had become a community marred and divided by recession, rationalisation and retrenchment. Such a transition was underpinned by several national and state-wide developments in the late 1980s and early 1990s. These included: the deregulation of the Australian economy, including the floating of the Australian dollar and the reduction of industry tariffs; the gradual abandonment of Tasmania's post-war 'hydro-industrialisation' and 'development at all costs' approach to state development<sup>2</sup>; the comprehensive rationalisation of Tasmania's public sector in order to contain the state's escalating deficit (Haward and Larmour 1993); and the introduction of piecemeal industrial relations reforms (e.g. enterprise bargaining) (Hanson 1993; Kelly 1992). The decline of hydro-industrialisation was particularly regrettable for those who had watched investment on the Coast accelerate during the post-war period alongside the expanded powers of the Hydro Electricity Commission in Tasmania ('A new power era closer' *The Advocate* 2/3/1992: 6).

While the economic downturn of the early 1990s affected numerous settlements and small businesses along the NW Coast, the deterioration of the relationship between the Burnie community and its major employer, Associated Pulp and Paper Mill Limited, during this period is particularly illustrative of the changing demands of Australia's new globalised economy and the consequences for regional communities. Since its establishment in 1938, the pulp and paper mill had played a central role in the industrial development of the region and an active role in community life. During the difficult inter-war year period, the mill provided much-needed employment opportunities for both young men and women, and later became a catalyst for substantial population and economic growth in the Burnie district as the mill's processing operations expanded (Pink 2000: 175-76). However, from its inception, the mill was assisted by government concessions, most directly through the special 1924 *Wood Pulp and Paper Industry Bill* which gave the company the right to cut timber on Crown land, but also through the protection of imported products (Pink 2000: 177-184). Accordingly, the subsequent reduction by the Federal Government of import tariffs, the growing 'green' conscience in Tasmania and the inevitable ageing of the mill's processing operations, left the company in an economically vulnerable position in the late 1980s. In March 1992, the company introduced a new workplace regime based on the 'right to manage' without interference from union leaders, and management advised workers by

---

<sup>2</sup> The degree to which Tasmania's State Government has abandoned a 'development at all costs' approach in the late twentieth century is highly contestable; however, the signing of Tasmania's Parliamentary Accord by the five Green Independents and Labor leader Michael Field in 1989 did signal the beginning of a more consensual approach to environmental and economic management in Tasmania.

letter of the decision to remove over-award arrangements and eliminate restrictive work practices (Hanson 1993). Such heavy-handed tactics stretched the goodwill that had been forged between the mill's managers, the mill's workers and the Burnie community over half a century and resulted in a major industrial strike from early April to June; a strike that was strongly supported by mill families and much of the Burnie community (Hanson 1993: 24; *The Advocate* 19/5/1992: 1). Although the company proceeded with work place reforms and invested in the upgrading of operations on the Coast following this period of industrial unrest, in September 1993 APPM and its parent company North Broken Hill Peko sold the Burnie mill to Amcor. Five years later, Amcor announced its decision to shutdown the mill and, despite community protest, the mill was closed as planned in October 1998. Today, a scaled down operation at Burnie's plant processes imported pulp (Pink 2000: 184-7).

Employment contraction, the tightening of workers' conditions, the closure of major operations on the Coast, and the decline in new capital investment concentrated regional managerial efforts on the twin issues of how to maintain existing jobs on the Coast and how to create new secure jobs for the future. Although concerns were expressed for older retrenched employees, the employment prospects for young people were at the forefront of such debates as not only did the statistics indicate that this group were particularly affected by the economic downturn ('Tasmania's teenage unemployment worst in North-West', West *The Advocate* 20/9/1993), young people also symbolised the future of the Coast; to lose young people to more prosperous towns and regions, and to fail to create secure and well-paid career paths for young families was to place the Coast's future development in jeopardy. As highlighted in the previous section, within local debate concerns over regional decline and the out-migration of young people were inextricably linked:

There is an unchanged message for Tasmania in the December unemployment figures released late last week. It is that the State desperately needs job-producing private investment and government expenditure on capital works to soak up the number of jobless Tasmanians and prevent the brain drain interstate (Editorial, 'Old message in job figures', *The Advocate*, 15/1/1990).

Although much of the initial debate on the Coast about regional decline pointed to a lack of government investment (e.g. 'Difficult times for Tasmania' *The Advocate* 3/7/1990: 6), young people themselves came to be problematised as under-skilled and inadequately prepared for the new wave of service sector investment (e.g. 'Pathway to a clever country' *The Advocate* 4/3/1993: 6; 'Students must stay at school longer: Field' *The Advocate* 20/5/1994: 5). While school retention rates and participation in post-secondary education had increased dramatically across Australia due to the refinement of education and equity



policy since the 1970s, the Coastal population had continued to defy these trends with young Coasters more likely to develop their skills on the job or in the home than to graduate from college and enrol at university. In contrast, by the early 1990s, there was a persistent monitoring of, and concern for, the Coast's exceptionally high levels of youth unemployment and its exceptionally low secondary school retention rates (e.g. 'NW Grade 10 drop-out rate worst in Tas. *The Advocate* 21/7/1994: 7). The blame for this situation was most often sheeted back to parents:

Mr McIver [a local principal] said that on the North-West Coast, where youth unemployment was very high, parents and young people were tempted to think getting any job was better than continuing schooling. ... "It disturbs me that looking for a job is seen to be of greater merit than continuing education. Especially when unskilled jobs are disappearing and the jobs of the future will demand higher levels of skill which can be obtained through continuing education and training ('Schooling wins out over work' *The Advocate* 17/3/1994: 4).

Life on the Coast in the late 1980s and early 1990s was challenged on multiple fronts. In hindsight, the 1990s represented the end of an era for a particular way of life on the Coast. During this period, the Coast had lost many of its major employers; it had been outmanoeuvred by the Greens (i.e. the Tasmanian Green Party and Tasmania's environmental movement) on new pulp mill investment and issues of resource security; vocal advocates of conservative Christian, family values on the Coast failed to prevent the revoking of anti-gay legislation in Tasmania (Morris 1995); and the community's historical aversion to post-secondary education and training was being challenged. Notably, the contraction and eventual demise of APPM in the 1990s was a cultural as well as an economic shift for the Coast in that its decline signalled the end of a period of company paternalism and the end of guaranteed long term employment with comfortable conditions on which many had built a stable family life on the Coast. By 2000, the Coast had a more efficient workforce, but it was also a more divided community with growing levels of unemployment and welfare dependency. In the post-war years, Burnie, Devonport and Ulverstone were industrial-centred towns where the home, the school, the street and the factory floor were tightly intertwined by a common culture and goal; one that was effective in the production of working class subjects for the working class factory floor. With structural changes in the national economy, technological advances at the pulp mill and eventually factory closures and large-scale job shedding, this secure way of life was eroded. People's confidence in being able to build a secure future for their children and a generationally-balanced community were lost. The problem of 'training and education' and

the 'loss of young people and their skills' were at the forefront of community debate, but such rhetoric was in constant tension as providing for young people's future, also meant losing young people.

### ***A shift in governmental priorities and tactics***

The political climate of the early 1990s took form in the shadow of a decade of governmental rationalisation, service contraction and withdrawal and the tightening of public sector expenditure. When the Australian Labor Party formed national government in 1983, the Prime Minister Bob Hawke and his treasurer Paul Keating embarked on a comprehensive reform campaign that was driven by the imperative to contain Australia's escalating foreign debt and boost Australia's productivity (Kelly 1992: 76-94). This campaign commenced with the deregulation of the financial sector and was followed by a series of measures aimed at the removal of vulnerabilities and inefficiencies within the national economy, such as the reduction of industry tariffs and support for more flexible collective bargaining arrangements between employers and workers. Federal leaders also took seriously prevailing intellectual trends within economic theory, which advocated a reduced role for government and a deference to free market principles wherever possible. Such an approach saw the government prioritise macro-economic reforms above social reforms within national debate and within budgetary allocations, and target internal inefficiencies throughout the 1980s. The latter entailed the privatisation of government utilities and publicly owned assets and the rationalisation of governmental departments and services (Smyth and Cass 1998).

Similar government programs were pursued at a state level across Australia. While some premiers were guided by a belief in the New Right philosophy, others were faced with their own state-based deficit problems. Tasmania fell into the latter category. Following the 1989 Tasmanian election, in which five green independent candidates supported the formation of a minority Labor government, Premier Michael Field discovered that Tasmania faced a severe financial crisis. Although the crisis reflected Tasmania's long-term structural economic problems, the Federal Government exacerbated Tasmania's financial predicament in two significant ways. Over the preceding decade it had reduced its financial contribution to the states (i.e. measured in 1980-81 values, commonwealth payments to the states were reduced from \$12,660 million in 1980-81 to \$12,352 million in 1989-1990) and, in turn, it had proportionally reduced its payment to Tasmania relative to other states (i.e. from \$580 million to \$458 million over the decade) (Felmingham 1993: 51-2). The federal treasurer's liberal use of interest rates as a mechanism for steadying the national economy

also impacted on state finances in the sense that the rapid increase in interest rates in the late 1980s increased the costs of servicing Tasmania's already inflated debt (Felmingham 1993: 52). In response, the Labor premier raised state-collected taxes and charges, a burden worn largely by Tasmanian primary producers, pruned government expenditure across state government programs, and introduced a large-scale redundancy program, which targeted 3,500 (or 14% of) public sector positions over three years (Felmingham 1993: 55). Again, the demands of the electorate for improved social services and government infrastructure were put on hold as the premier tried to ward off state bankruptcy.

With the onset of the recession in the early 1990s, the successes of the Hawke-Keating Government in putting the national economy on a sounder footing began to be eclipsed by growing discontent among the electorate, which had endured a decade of expenditure cutbacks for little tangible reward. While the electorate supported Hawke at the March 1990 election, largely due to the lack of a viable alternative government, there had been a swing away from the government (Kelly 1992: 586). By November 1990 the treasurer, who had worked hard to build Labor's credentials as a responsible and competent economic manager, announced that the Australian economy was officially in recession. Throughout the following year, Hawke and Keating continued to push their hard economic line in the face of poor investment and employment statistics:

The Federal Government yesterday offered no quick fixes for Australia's jobless legions...he [Mr Hawke] said it was important to maintain fundamental policy settings because Australia was "on the threshold of a new era of achievement" with sustainable job growth built on low inflation and an internationally competitive economy ('\$313m. move to boost jobs' *The Advocate* 15/11/1991: 1).

However, following the defeat of Hawke by Keating in a caucus ballot in December 1991, Keating turned his attention to the concerns of disenfranchised sectional interests, and past macro-economic reforms were augmented by a new phase of micro-economic reform and governmental expenditure. During this phase, Keating attempted to build a synthesis between the market economics of the New Right and the Labor tradition of justice and equity (Kelly 2000: 109-117). Accordingly, major policy initiatives drew simultaneously on the 'advanced liberal' tactics of deregulation and Labor's traditional preference for centralist nationalist planning (Meredyth 1998: 20-21).

This switch in national governmental priorities and tactics provided some respite to regions, such as the Coast, which had fared badly during the protracted recession. By the mid-1990s, this new approach began to be translated into concrete governmental initiatives, most

notably the Federal Government's white paper on employment, *Working Nation* (Prime Minister of Australia 1994). In May 1994, Prime Minister Keating unveiled *Working Nation*, a \$6.5 billion commitment over four years to reduce unemployment, with the aim of achieving five per cent unemployment by the turn of the century. The strategy contained a range of measures aimed at improving the correspondence between workers skills and competencies and the demands of industry, largely through the expansion of vocational education and training programs, but also through the subsidising of employment and training placements for young people. These measures depended on national central planning and coordination, and government investment. Other initiatives, however, signalled the further withdrawal of government regulation. For example, the government proposed a 'work for the dole' program for those who had been on unemployment for more than eighteen months and it proposed a restructuring of the existing Commonwealth Employment Service, including the opening of employment services to private sector competition. In addition to employment and training initiatives, *Working Nation* also proposed some initiatives to address the economic problems of regional Australia, with the Government offering \$150 million over four years to 'help regional Australia help itself' ('Regions told to help themselves' *The Advocate* 5/5/1994: 4). While *Working Nation* represented a big investment program for the Federal Government, the initiatives outlined in this strategy were couched in terms of best practice, market competition, contractualisation and individual responsibility (Meredyth 1998: 20-21). Such a program was welcomed by regional managers on the Coast, with some concerns that the Labor government had fallen short by not investing in long-term infrastructure projects and offering tax relief for industry in regional Australia, strategies associated with Labor governments of the past ('Regions told to help themselves' *The Advocate* 5/5/1994: 4; Editorial 'White Paper must deliver' *The Advocate* 3/5/1994: 6; Editorial 'Short straw for regions?' *The Advocate* 10/5/1994: 6).

In Tasmania, the Accord negotiated between the Labor party and the Green Independents in 1989 broke down after a year in office, and the term of the minority Government ended two years later with the election of a majority Liberal government in February 1992. When the new premier, Ray Groom, took office he faced the same financial predicament as the former premier, but with a reform program centred on public sector rationalisation and redundancy already in train. The Groom Government continued with the Field Government's program, but made minor adjustments based on its political priorities and commitments made throughout the election campaign. One of those commitments was to reintroduce the Tertiary Allowance that had previously been available to students who were from rural Tasmanian areas and who were studying at the University of Tasmania. The Liberal State

Government continued to emphasise productivity reforms, rather than reverting to popular large-scale, government expenditure programs to alleviate unemployment ('State govt has crucial role to play' *The Advocate* 29/6/1993), with some piecemeal concessions as the jobs crisis worsened ('State to provide own jobs scheme' *The Advocate* 6/5/1994: 1). In regards to both the Coastal and Tasmanian problem of 'regional decline, youth unemployment and youth out-migration' in the early 1990s, the treasurer Tony Rundle announced the Government's intention to formulate a population strategy ('People push by govt', *The Advocate* 20/7/1993: 1-2; Growth paths for Tasmania' *The Advocate* 21/7/1993: 6). The aim of the strategy was to create the right type of "social and economic environment" in order to "encourage young Tasmanians to stay in the State." ('Growth paths for Tasmania' *The Advocate* 21/7/1993: 6). As highlighted in the previous chapter, this program was formalised with the formation of the Tasmanian population taskforce in 1996. The aim of the taskforce was to facilitate state population growth through the promotion of Tasmania to mainlanders, namely retirees, and to former residents. A recent review of the taskforce's activities notes that despite the redirection of approximately \$750,000 towards the population growth campaign, interstate arrivals fell and Tasmania's population continued to decline during the 1996 to 1998 period (DTF 2003: 58). Notably, one of the main criticisms of the taskforce was that it did not effectively target interstate departures (DTF 2003: 58); in other words, it was insufficiently focused on 'keeping Tasmanians at home'.

On the Coast, local initiatives sprang up in response to the regional unemployment crisis and the absence of federal and state government expenditure programs in the early 1990s. Although local councillors and local government staff along the Coast were preoccupied with negotiations over the form of council amalgamation and the threat of further public sector cutbacks, they were outspoken on the need for inter-governmental solutions to address regional decline and long-term unemployment. While their first response was to look to the Federal and the State Governments to provide new employment creation schemes and new incentives for capital investment in Tasmania, just as they had done in response to the Depression of the '30s (Robson and Roe 1997: 104), the failure of these appeals encouraged local councillors and community leaders to pursue local strategies to market and promote the region and local businesses. For example, between 1990 and 1991 the Mersey Enterprise Centre was established, the 'Plug the Leaks' and 'Buy Locally' campaigns were launched, and local business committees were formed to support regional development. During this period, the local community strengthened its links with local businesses and set about trying to turnaround the structural economic problems of the Coast. Local media played an important role in this campaign in instructing its readers not to rely

“cargo cult-like, on government” (Editorial, ‘A rocky year. Better ahead?’ *The Advocate* 1/1/1991: 6), but instead to look to the future with ‘confidence’ and ‘optimism’:

... confident people get things done and a confident approach makes it easier to weather the hard time and to take advantage of the upswing when it comes.” (‘Facing 1993 with confidence’ *The Advocate* 4/1/1993: 6).

### **3.4.2 Managing youth mobility**

Having chartered the shape of Australian governance and the rationales for governmental intervention in young regional lives in the early 1990s, I now provide a more detailed commentary and analysis of one specific governmental initiative centred on the management of young people on the Coast: the establishment of a university facility – the NW Study Centre.

#### ***The North West Study Centre: A collaborative solution (1990-1999)***

If the whole range of university courses was available on the Coast, many more people would be persuaded to undertake tertiary education, our young people would be more likely to stay and business organisations would be attracted, thus creating job opportunities (Letter to the editor, ‘University’ *The Advocate* 13/9/1991: 6).

While the concessions outlined in the Federal Government’s *Working Nation* and the optimistic marketing campaigns of regional managers were embraced as important steps towards the revival of the region and Coastal community life, the most ambitious and enduring strategy formulated in the early 1990s to manage the intractable problems of ‘youth unemployment, regional decline and youth out-migration’ was the expansion of higher education. Although the twin problems of inadequate educational facilities on the Coast and low rates of university participation among the Coastal population had long been a concern for local teachers and state educational bureaucrats, it was industrial restructuring and the ensuing economic downturn that brought these issues to the attention of previously disinterested parties such as the Federal Government, local business people, working families and young people who on leaving school were increasingly likely to join the dole queue rather than the local workforce.

This new set of circumstances, that is, the combination of high levels of youth unemployment and low school retention rates, saw the re-emergence of national concerns about welfare dependency, anti-social behaviour, and the consolidation of socio-economic disadvantage in particular locations. In the early 1990s, the federal Department of Health,

Housing, Local Government and Community Services undertook a comprehensive social justice research program into locational disadvantage. As one part of this research program, the Department conducted community surveys in ten disadvantaged regions, one of which was the NW Coast. The survey provided the Government with a snapshot of community perceptions and attitudes within regions that had been particularly affected by the Government's own policy reform campaign in the 1980s. The research documented existing government services and infrastructure in the region, as well as local community perceptions of the accessibility and the quality of services. The NW study (Bennett 1992: Section 4.5) revealed a plethora of concerns about service delivery, in particular the lack of access to higher education facilities. The study canvassed the limited tertiary facilities on the Coast (i.e. small-scale study centres) and summarised the key factors that had discouraged young people in the region from pursuing higher education including financial barriers, community and family attitudes, which emphasise the value of work and vocationally oriented education, and the personal costs of moving to another area. The section on higher education concludes:

Generally, it was felt that the hurdles were so great that the only students to get to university were those with high levels of self-confidence or supportive parents (Bennett 1992: Section 4.5).

These findings provided the impetus for a new round of inter-governmental negotiations to combat such worrying regional trends.

The problem on the Coast and for regional and national managers was that shifts in the global economy and the position of Australian manufacturing over the past decade had undermined the compact that had been forged over the past half-century between the major companies in the region, which had provided a steady flow of permanent jobs for local men and women, and workers, who had provided reliable labour to the company with minimal disruption and disputation. Times were changing and the new areas of investment in Australia such as tourism, information technology and communications emphasised literacy, flexible skills and higher educational qualifications, rather than common sense, technical skills and union tickets. With exceptionally low school retention rates and limited access to higher education, however, students on the Coast were not well placed to take advantage of this new wave of capital investment. From the Federal Government's perspective they represented potential 'human capital', which thus far had been undeveloped and unrealised. In regards to the development of a multi-skilled, flexible and technologically competent workforce, unemployed and under-educated youth were not the only problem worrying the



Federal Government. It had also begun to wonder whether the educational system itself was up to the task of delivering a vocationally orientated and technologically advanced training and education program. Accordingly, the Federal Government turned its attention to the development of vocationally orientated training programs focused on equipping young people with specific skills and competencies (Mayer 1992). Although the Government focused principally on *Technical And Further Education* (TAFE), it also identified universities as having an important role in delivering vocational education. One key policy direction in this period was the improvement of linkages between TAFE and university (Carmichael 1992). While the Federal Government's vocational approach was outlined in depth in its white paper on employment, *Working Nation*, in 1994, piecemeal reforms towards this system had commenced from the late 1980s onwards. Such an approach underscored the Federal Government's inquiry into agricultural and related education (DEET and DPIE 1991). This inquiry was one of the major catalysts in the establishment of the NW Study Centre.

The McColl review was established in 1990 to examine the current provision of agricultural and related education and to make recommendations on its future development (DEET and DPIE 1991: xiii), particularly in regards to the correspondence between education and training programs and industry requirements. In relation to Tasmania, the main finding of the McColl review was that the state's main provider was currently poorly placed to meet the agricultural sector's future needs:

The University of Tasmania is the only provider in the State of higher education courses in the agricultural and related area. However, its Chair of Agricultural Science has been vacant for a number of years, its enrolments are considerably below the minimum number, its course offerings are limited and its operations depend substantially on support external to the Department of Agricultural Science (DEET and DPIE 1991: 117).

The report noted that if undergraduate education was to continue in the state then the major priorities for administrators were to restructure the existing agricultural faculty at the University of Tasmania and to increase linkages between the University and other agencies such as TAFE, Tasmania's Department of Agriculture and key agriculture and related industry groups.

Both of these federal inquiries, the confidential community survey of the NW Coast (Bennett 1992) and the McColl inquiry into agricultural and related education (DEET and DPIE: 1991), played an important role in harnessing federal support for the expansion of

higher education on the NW Coast: the former in terms of drawing national attention to the degree of community dissatisfaction with government service provision in disadvantaged regions; and the latter in terms of drawing national attention to inadequacies within Tasmania's education and training system.

### ***Bringing higher education to the Coast***

Locally, it was the McColl report's findings that had the most immediate impact on the campaign to establish a study centre on the NW Coast. In response to the McColl review, the University of Tasmania established a working party to examine the future delivery of agricultural and related education in Tasmania. This working party undertook consultations with education service providers and local industry on the NW Coast and, most importantly, the inquiry provided a forum for discussions around what an integrated TAFE-university education agricultural program might look like on the Coast. The working party was required to make recommendations about: the future of agricultural and related education in Tasmania in relation to the feasibility of University and TAFE co-operation; the potential for developing links between the University, government agencies and industry interests; and the range, length and types of courses offered through the faculty of agricultural science (University of Tasmania 1992: 1). The University of Tasmania also established a working committee in May 1991 to examine higher education provisions on the NW Coast ('NW enrolments prompt review of uni. education' *The Advocate* 3/5/1991: 5; Editorial, *The Advocate* 6/5/91: 6) largely in response to increased enrolments on the Coast at the University of Tasmania's northern study centres in Devonport and Burnie between 1989 and 1990. These university reviews provided the forum for a serious public debate about the establishment of a Coastal university campus throughout 1991 and the benefits of such a proposal for the region.

The novelty of the campaign to bring higher education to the Coast was that the proposal was widely embraced by a diverse range of interests and it was viewed as the solution to a diverse range of issues. Although the Centre represented a big expenditure item for a federal government that had emphasised the need for prudential governance, the Centre also represented an opportunity for the Government to implement its educational and training reforms and to redirect money in those regions that had fared badly from industrial restructuring. On the Coast, vocal advocates for the Centre provided a list of local benefits that they felt the Centre could deliver. These included:

- social justice and equity for the Coast in terms of access to higher education ('Coast needs campus' *The Advocate* 18/11/1991: 6; 'Opportunity for NW education' *The Advocate* 28/5/1991: 6);
- regional renewal (Editorial 'Taking up a just cause' *The Advocate* 11/9/1991: 6);
- a re-skilled workforce that could more effectively meet the demands of industries in the region (Editorial 'Taking up a just cause' *The Advocate* 11/9/1991: 6);
- a viable pathway for the escalating number of unemployed youth in the region ('Coastal uni campus call' *The Advocate* 5/5/1991: 1); and
- a cure to the brain-drain phenomenon ('Coastal uni campus call' *The Advocate* 5/5/1991: 1).

The following editorial extract is illustrative of the type of local arguments articulated in favour of the NW Study Centre:

Anything which advances the cause of tertiary education and of industry on the North-West Coast can only be commended. The committee formed by a group of Coastal businessmen to try to make tertiary education in Tasmania more relevant to rural industry seeks to improve the learning opportunities of North-West tertiary students and at the same time benefit the agricultural industries which form an integral part of the region's economy. The group's argument is that the relevance of agricultural science subjects taught at the University of Tasmania ends at the farm gate, and that Coastal processing companies wanting to employ suitably qualified graduates have to recruit from interstate. This is not satisfactory for industries which would prefer to employ local people, or where the career prospects of agriculturally minded young Coasters having to face the problems associated with remoteness from Hobart are concerned. It is a matter which needed to be raised (Editorial 'Taking up a just cause' *The Advocate* 11/9/1991: 6).

In regards to the University, the proposal was welcomed as an opportunity to demonstrate the University's commitment to the Federal Government's new national educational and training priorities, to respond to increased enrolments on the Coast, to expand the University's operational base, and to deliver more federal funding and student placements to Tasmania ('NW enrolments prompt review of uni education' *The Advocate* 3/5/1991: 5; 'NW uni interest' *The Advocate* 31/5/1991: 3).

The only real politicking that took place throughout the campaign to bring higher education to the Coast was a rather parochial argument about the location of the campus. From the inception of the project Burnie had been identified as the preferred site for any new

development. From the Federal Government's perspective and the University's perspective, the Burnie site was crucial in ensuring that the project would facilitate strong linkages between the Centre and the existing agricultural department at the Burnie regional college of TAFE. However, during the early phases of the debate Central Coast councillor Alderman Binks argued against the Burnie proposal on the basis that it would not address the 'brain drain' from Devonport ('Uni urged to reject move' *The Advocate* 8/10/1991: 2). Much later in the debate, following the provisional announcement of the Centre, the State Government revived this argument with the view that Ulverstone was the demographic centre of the Coast and therefore was the obvious place to put the Centre ('Uni campus tipped for Ulverstone' *The Advocate* 3/7/1992:3). However, it was the Federal Government, with the money and the political willpower, that would decide where the Centre would be built. By 1992, Burnie became an even more attractive prospect for the Federal Labor Government, as although it was a strong liberal seat (held by MHR Chris Miles), the Federal Government's support for the pulp mill workers in a large-scale industrial dispute in early 1992 provided some possibility of a swing back to Labor.

Following an intensive round of lobbying and negotiations, the new university facility on the Coast appeared as the centrepiece of the working party's findings released in May 1992 (University of Tasmania 1992: 16-18). In December 1992, the Federal Government confirmed that they had committed \$1.5m to the development of new educational facilities at Burnie and they announced their support for the provision of additional places at the University of Tasmania in 1995 in order to accommodate the anticipated growth in enrolments on the NW Coast. In announcing the initiative, the federal member for Denison, Duncan Kerr emphasised that the NW Study Centre would provide young people on the Coast with more educational and training options and would allow greater integration and correspondence between industry, TAFE and the University:

"The new campus at Burnie, linked closely with TAFE, embodies the Government's policy of establishing closer links between the various types of post-compulsory education and improving the quality and variety of pathways to post-school education" (*The Advocate* 18/12/1992: 2).

The State Government also contributed to the initiative through the provision of land for the Centre. The NW Study Centre opened in September 1995 with the first students enrolled in 1996 (a federal election year).

### *Establishing a university presence on the Coast*

The degree of inter-governmental support for the establishment of a resource-intensive study centre on the Coast and the relatively short gestation period for the project were both quite remarkable given that the project was conceived in the midst of a national recession and in the shadow of an extended period of public sector redundancy and rationalisation. Although the range of stakeholders involved in the project supported the proposal for assorted reasons, they had formed a relatively strong and coherent alliance prior to the establishment of the Centre. However, as the project progressed and institutional priorities shifted, higher education on the Coast looked like a more fragile and less viable prospect. So much so that in 1996, the Hobart Lord Mayor Doone Kennedy called on the University to relocate higher education back where it belonged – in Hobart ('NW uni safe: Vice-chancellor' *The Advocate* 15/8/1996: 5).

The first crisis over the Centre's future, which exposed the latent tensions between the various stakeholders involved in the project, was the issue of federally funded student places. In May 1995, the Government set out its allocation of new growth places in the federal budget: 1,950 places in 1996, 2,300 places in 1997 and 1,600 places in 1998. The University of Tasmania was allocated 45 new growth places, but was not allocated additional growth places for the new NW Study Centre. While federal government representatives had toured the Coast and promised local leaders that they had the answer to social justice concerns — a university campus as well as the money to finance the project — another administrative arm, the education department, was diligently calculating funding formulas for the next round of student placements. Ironically, these calculations were based on sound planning principles and precise demographic analyses — the very measures on which the NW Coast had performed so badly in the past. The result was a contradiction and separation between the Federal Government's position paper on educational opportunities on the Coast (Bennett 1992) and the Federal Government's allocation of university student placements, which in the mid-1990s was based on growing populations. As the local Labor Senator Nick Sherry explained:

... a difficulty for the Coast was the low retention rate for Year 12 and low population growth compared with other areas in Australia ('State to fight for university allocation' *The Advocate* 13/5/1995: 4).

Accordingly, the new growth places were allocated to the states that had relatively young and expanding populations: Queensland, New South Wales and Western Australia.

On receiving this news, the University called on the State Government and the Coastal community to support it in its campaign to lobby the Federal Government to allocate the university 20 to 30 additional growth places in order to enable the university to accommodate the anticipated increase in enrolments on the NW Coast ('Uni place row' *The Advocate* 12/5/1995: 1-2). The State Government and the community did respond swiftly to the university's request, expressing their anger at the Federal Government's lack of concern for the educational disadvantages faced by young people on the Coast ('State to fight for university allocation' *The Advocate* 13/5/1995: 4; Editorial 'Uni knockback is an insult' *The Advocate* 15/5/1995: 6). By this stage it was clear that there were fissures between the Federal Government's actual priorities and local expectations regarding the role of the Government in supporting the university. For example, the Burnie Mayor felt that:

... the North-West had been dealt a raw deal. "The Federal Government talks about fairness and social justice. They are not giving the people of the North-West a chance. The whole idea of setting up the campus is to overcome the problems of getting students participating in higher education. The Federal Government haven't taken into account the problems they are causing ('State to fight for university allocation' *The Advocate* 13/5/1995: 4).

Once again, concerns about Tasmania's and the Coast's brain drain were aired by local stakeholders:

[The Premier] said it would take the combined efforts of the Federal and State Governments to stop a "youth brain drain" from Tasmania ('United university drive' *The Advocate* 6/7/1995: 3).

In response to a request from federal Labor members based in Tasmania, the Federal Government announced in early July that the north west places were under review ('NW uni places under review' *The Advocate* 7/7/1995: 1). Later in the month, the Federal Minister for Employment, Education and Training, Simon Crean, announced that it was prepared to allocate 20 new growth places to the Centre from 1997 onwards (as opposed to the original request for the places to be allocated from 1996 onwards). Crean also suggested that the additional 10 student places requested by the University be found through the diversion of places from Hobart and Launceston ('Heat turned back on uni: NW campus wins 20 extra places' *The Advocate* 19/7/1995: 1-2). The University ignored the pointed criticism and instead praised local politicians, the local media, and community representatives for extracting the additional places and the associated funds (approximately \$10,000 of extra funding per student place) from the Federal Government (*The Advocate* 19/7/1995: 1-2).

Representatives from the Coast, however, would not let the matter rest so easily. Instead, the Editor of the Advocate, who had been a vocal supporter of the campaign, expressed disappointment at the Federal Government's compromise and turned the question of responsibility for the allocation back on the university:

The fact that the region will have to wait till 1997, however, for the additional allocation is a reminder that every concession to the Coast, in tertiary education will continue to be hard-won.

The onus swings back onto the university itself to now demonstrate that its commitment to the Coast is significant and meaningful. The question raised yesterday about why some of a total of 45 growth places at the university this year were not allocated to the new Burnie campus is a significant one. It is further evidence that all committed to delivery of quality tertiary educational opportunities on the Coast must remain vigilant and be prepared to battle for equitable treatment. (Editor 'Headway with extra places' *The Advocate* 19/7/1995: 6).

While the University had been quick to advise the local community of the Federal Government's failure to support higher education on the Coast, it had not been explicit about its own funding priorities, which clearly lay with the main campuses, Hobart and Launceston. Concerns about the University and the Federal Government's commitment to the project were raised again by *The Advocate's* Editor when it became clear that a number of the courses offered at the Centre would be limited to first year face-to-face units only, with the remainder of the degree being pursued either through correspondence or by moving to the main campuses (Editorial 'Concern over the centre's future' *The Advocate* 8/9/1995: 6).

The announcement of the Federal Government's failure to redirect funding and student places to the Burnie campus was met with outrage from the University of Tasmania administrators, and State and local politicians on multiple occasions. Yet when the Federal Government deliberated over the placements, and local leaders looked to the University for support, there was a considerable shift in position. Although in attacking the Federal Government, the University had deployed arguments based on their concerns about social justice, it did not have the financial capacity or political willpower to redirect funding from the existing major campuses to the new campus experiment. They defended their inaction on grounds that the University needed to protect the quality of university education. They were only prepared to support equitable tertiary access if someone else paid for it. As the Vice-Chancellor explained at the opening of the new NW Study Centre:



Why can't the university do more? Essentially because it is not interested in being a second-rate institution offering Tasmanians mediocre higher education. The university has not been willing to solve problems of access at the expense of the overall quality agenda at the heart of its strategic planning (Professor Alan Gilbert, 'Commitment unwavering' *The Advocate* 14/9/1995: 2).

The Federal Minister Simon Crean was also challenged to declare his future support for the NW Study Centre at the opening ceremony (Editorial 'Concern over the Centre's future, *The Advocate* 8/9/1995: 6). While he spoke favourably about the NW Study Centre, he did note that regional communities would have to play a major role in its development and that the Government had some concerns about future enrolments from the Coast:

Mr Crean said Tasmania's population in the 17-34 age group was expected to decline by 4.7 p.c. between 1994 and 2005. Participation rates in the North-West were particularly low, mainly due to the low school retention rate to year 12. Three-quarters of the students now enrolled in Burnie were part-time and half were aged over 30 ('Centre opened' *The Advocate* 16/9/1995: 3).

The temporary divisions and wavering support of various stakeholders were not fatal to the project, and the NW Study Centre opened on time with 294 students enrolled at the Centre in 1996 (University of Tasmania 1996). However, the Centre continued to be subject to competing governmental priorities. For example, in November 1995 the 20 new student growth places were again under threat as the Government met trouble with its plan to raise the required revenue for the new student places through reforms to the Higher Education Contribution Scheme (HECS). Fortunately for the Coast, these reforms, which included the acceleration of HECS repayments and upfront fees for students who were not Australian citizens ('NW uni places under threat: Senate rejection leads to HECS funding row' *The Advocate* 25/11/1995: 1-2), were rejected by the Senate, before a compromised position, which delivered the extra funding required for the NW growth places, was passed ('NW to get extra uni places' *The Advocate* 2/12/1995: 1).

### **3.4.3 The capacities and limitations of managing youth mobility through education**

The establishment of a university centre on the NW Coast was the most ambitious governmental response to the twin problems of youth unemployment and youth out-migration in the 1990s. Of course, as I have noted, the NW Centre was not simply a response to the issues facing young Coasters — though this was primarily how the proposal

was framed — but also a program that had the capacity to deliver a range of positive governmental outcomes to a region and a population that had come to be a problem for political leaders at all levels. The case reveals the manner in which young people and specific youth policy initiatives come to be enrolled in a host of competing agenda and strategies, which in turn give rise to effects that were not anticipated by the original architects. In regards to the university, to date its presence has made a considerable contribution to the Coast's development and yet it has not met one of the primary objectives articulated by local spokespeople: to stem the outflow of young people. This is evident in the high levels of mature age students enrolled on campus, and in the departure of many school leavers to the major campuses in second year. For example, around 50% of the 1998, 1999 and 2000 student intakes at the NW Study Centre were mature age students (Data provided by University of Tasmania, May 2003). In regards to continuing study, 41% of the 1998 enrolments who decided to continue with their study moved to the university's main campuses, 61% of the 1999 enrolments continued at the University's two main campuses, and 56% of 2000 enrolments continued at the University's two main campuses (Data provided by University of Tasmania, May 2003). Though campus administrators have celebrated many wins in the early stages of its development, most notably in the expansion of a viable postgraduate research program in the fields of agriculture and the health sciences, the organisation's capacity to deliver an alternative undergraduate program to young school leavers appears to be largely constrained by its marginal status within the Australian university system and within the university's structure, as well as by the demographic profile of the region. Drawing on documentary materials and the perspectives of young people from the Coast, I briefly discuss the limitations on managing youth mobility through education, and the unanticipated ways in which the university has enhanced and shaped the experiences of those who leave and those who stay.

In the latter part of the twentieth century there has been a uniform embracing of higher education as a universally 'good thing' among policy-makers and within the general populace. Often in the rush to promote higher education it is easy to forget that despite the expansion of higher education from the 1970s onwards, university has long been a privileged and elitist domain within society. The university system is hierarchical at all levels. While the more established campuses are able to harness the most notable and productive researchers, command the bulk of competitive extensive research grants, and attract the best-performing school leavers, regional and more recently established campuses must compete against one another for the remaining resources. The NW campus is at the margins of this hierarchical system. Not only is it in competition with major universities on

the mainland, but it also has to compete for resources from within its own organisation. As the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Tasmania made clear during the campaign to establish a university presence on the Coast, the University did not consider the Centre to be a third campus, but rather an alternative model — a rural university centre. Although the University was committed to supporting the Centre, it would not do so at the expense of the main campuses in Hobart and Launceston. For those attending the NW Centre this has resulted in some frustration at the lack of course choices, the limited contact with senior academics and researchers, and the difficulty of completing an entire degree program locally. In my interviews with young people, the choice for many was clearly between the university's main campuses or mainland universities. Among the eighteen young people I interviewed, three were keen to study on the Coast, but only one actually enrolled at the NW campus. While one student (Alice) chose to enrol in distance education as the Centre did not offer the degree she was interested in, another student (Rachel) was discouraged when she discovered that her favoured course was not accredited by the relevant national professional body. As she was committed to returning to the Coast to be with her fiancée, she decided to enrol in an accredited long distance degree with a mainland university.

Certainly, the university's presence has provided a valuable entry point into the university system for those who would prefer to stay on the Coast but who would also like to study. However, in order to complete their degree or to undertake particular units many students need to move to the other campuses. In this sense, the university merely delays departure and, in some instances, facilitates departure by introducing students to university life and nurturing students (i.e. showing those less confident of their academic abilities that they can succeed within the university system). The experiences of Sean illustrate the problems that confront those students who would prefer to stay and to study locally. Sean enrolled at the NW centre on completing year 12 because he felt it was the most obvious path for people like him and because it enabled him to keep his job, live at home and save some cash for a year:

SEAN: Okay well I didn't work at all til after grade 12 finished. I graduated in November and then ..it all blends in cos school is this place as well, so school is sort of, it's all blurred [Sean is referring to the fact that the Burnie campus is located near his high school], but anyhow I had a part-time job in the Christmas holidays after grade 12 and then I started here [the NW Centre]. I always knew I was going here pretty much cos of the trend my brother did before me — he's four years older than me. Um.

MICHELLE: Did he do computing as well?

SEAN: I'm not really sure. I think he just started computing and after about the first year he thought no this is enough and he went into the airforce.

MICHELLE: He didn't inspire you to go straight into the airforce?

SEAN: No, I'm not that way inclined. Well I came here [the NW Centre] because the main number one reason would have been because of money and Mum told me that it would be good way to save up a bit. Then I spent 9-11 months at my first year of uni, which was here, and while I was studying I just worked at \_\_\_\_\_ and yeah did two semesters here. Then I quit work after the Christmas holidays, when I was going down to Hobart (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

Sean was very positive about his experience at the campus. He noted that the students received a lot of support from staff, the atmosphere on campus was familiar and friendly, and he did not have to face the multitude of problems associated with moving out of home and living independently. In order to complete his degree, however, he needed to move to the main campus in Hobart. It was only when he moved south that he started to think that perhaps he had 'stayed at home too long' and consequently had been left behind by his peers:

MICHELLE: How did you cope with moving out? What was difficult or easy about managing the transition?

SEAN: It was easy. I've always been okay by-myself, to live by-myself, whatever. There was the loneliness factor, but moving down wasn't an issue. I'd always felt that I'd stayed at home too long. My friends went a year ahead of me and I lost them when I went down (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

(...)

MICHELLE: So have you kept in contact with your other friends from high school?

SEAN: Yeah, there were a few that went on to the uni here [NW Centre] that I would say hi to, but wouldn't see them outside uni. And when I went down to Hobart the same thing happened. Yeah, I just don't catch up with them. You see the people that left the year before, down there, they're all into the uni thing, and I've just moved in. Most of them didn't really make an effort to catch up as far as I can see. That's a negative thing to say, but that's how it is (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

Reflecting on his experiences, Sean told me that although he has encountered more trying times in his second year in Hobart, he valued the independence he had gained since moving away from the Coast:

MICHELLE: How do you think you've changed since moving away from home?

SEAN: When I moved to Hobart I realised I was still in grade 12. I hadn't changed my attitudes and I was still a kid. But I think I've grown up a bit down there (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

While the university has not contained the out-migration of young people, it has made a considerable contribution to the region's development in terms of its collaboration with local industry, the expansion of its postgraduate program, the expansion of tertiary educational options on the Coast, and the promotion of higher education on the Coast. Such achievements fit well with the national objectives articulated in the *McColl Report* (1991) and *Working Nation* (1994), which focused on greater collaboration and integration between TAFE and university in order to foster the development of a trained and educated labour force well-equipped with the skills and flexibility to success in a post-industrial, service-drive economy. In regards to the capacity to manage mobility through education, the Centre, like many other operations on the Coast, has already attracted new people to the region and has already established itself as a focal point for the influx of keynote speakers and the circulation of new information and ideas. For the young people who have left the Coast and their parents, the arrival of the university signals other opportunities. For a small number of young people, the Centre's presence offers a wider selection of professional jobs locally, and thus enables those educated elsewhere to return to the region. For far more, however, the arrival of the university represents part of a gradual shift in the culture of the Coast and a greater awareness among family and friends of what their experiences away from home and at university entailed. With many young people from the Coast being the first in their family to attend university, there remains considerable admiration for their achievements, but also suspicion of the worth of such experiences. This is true of Laura's experiences:

MICHELLE: And were they helpful on giving advice on heading to uni?

LAURA: Well neither of them actually went to university so they were pretty clueless there. But um they, my dad has a lot of trouble understanding like he says "Okay well you go to uni like full on for three days, well then what do you do for the rest of the week? You've got four days like you should have plenty of time," but he doesn't sort of understand that you go to uni but you have to spend the other three days reading all the work and catching up and stuff. ... And like Dad says "What are you spending money on?" and I say "Well I photocopy it, eat it and drive it".

MICHELLE: So he underestimates how much you do.

LAURA: Yeah, he's sort of a bit suspicious about uni because he always says "Every dickhead I know has got an arts degree blah blah blah", but at the same time I don't think he would be satisfied if I had just gone on from year 12 and got a job that didn't really have a lot of prospects (20 year old, Ulverstone, 29/5/2001).

As a number of young people made clear in their interviews it was the cultural gulf between their new home and their old home, rather than the physical distance between themselves and their parents that concerned them most (See chapter four). By raising awareness of the university's activities within the community, organising public forums and information days, and celebrating student's achievements, parents, who had previously dismissed higher education as something for 'smart people' elsewhere, are able to learn about and use this community resource, or even enrol in a degree. As one parent explained, when her daughter reached college she realised that she wanted to have the skills to be able to support her in her education and so she returned to study (Mother, Burnie, 7/3/2001). In this respect, the university centre has played a critical role in bridging the cultural gulf between a generation of workers who had left school behind them in order to pursue a secure career with local industry, and a generation of young people who are increasingly pursuing training and education, to gain some credentials, in order to gain a foothold within a competitive and changeable labour market.

### 3.5 SUMMARY

In this third chapter, I specified an analytical framework for studying the governmental aspects of regional youth migration, and I applied this framework to my study of youth migration on the NW Coast of Tasmania. I began by tracing the emergence of two specialised fields of social scientific expertise, regional studies and youth studies; fields that have informed past and present attempts to manage the problem of regional youth migration. This was important in terms of situating my research project within the tradition of youth mobility research, and in terms of situating present strategies designed to contain youth out-migration on the NW Coast within a long history of policy responses to rural de-population and youth mobility.

In regards to the management of regional youth migration, I observed an ongoing tension between strategies designed to manage particular regions and strategies designed to manage young people across several historical sites. More recently, however, these tensions appear to have been obscured as youth specialists have sought to critique and promote policy

centred on the management of young people and their mobility. Within such research the issue of youth migration has been analysed within a model of multiple youth transitions, and, accordingly, such research has become somewhat unhinged from the priorities and the fate of regional communities. In contrast, my governmental study of regional youth migration on the NW Coast reintroduces and accommodates these tensions. Influenced by Foucaultian writing on governance, I focused on the contradictions, complications and policy cross-purposes that affect present attempts to manage youth migration on the NW Coast.

In regards to my case research, I found that existing vocabularies and competing rationalities and interests circumscribed policy reforms on the NW Coast. This was most evident in the submersion of regional priorities centred on containing youth migration, in favour of national priorities centred on the personal development and advancement of individual citizens. My research showed that while regional managers on the Coast were successful in extracting real concessions from the Federal Government to potentially keep their young people at home (i.e. funding for a Coastal university campus), such concessions also provided an opportunity to enrol regional players in national attempts to manage populations, typically 'problem populations', at a distance. In conclusion, I observed that while the campus promised to resolve these contradictory objectives by enabling young people to get an education and stay at home, in practice studying at the local university merely delayed the inevitable move, or it meant staying in the local area and redefining the culture of the Coast. And yet although the NW Study Centre has had a limited effect on containing youth migration in the short term, it has had a marked effect on the reshaping of the work-centred cultural life of the Coast.

Overall, the research presented in this chapter indicates that a Foucaultian-influenced governmental analysis is valuable in drawing out new aspects of youth migration policies and programs. Such analysis, however, cannot provide a comprehensive picture of the phenomenon of regional youth migration as experienced by young people, their families and their local community. In order to so, I also need to account for young people's experiences of socio-spatial mobility. It is the experiences of young people on the Coast, which I now turn to in my third, and final, study of regional youth migration.



## *Chapter 4*

### **NEGOTIATING SPATIAL, GENERATIONAL AND CULTURAL DIFFERENCES**

subjectivity ♦ community ♦ identity ♦ youth ♦ mobility ♦ difference ♦ family ♦ class

#### **4.1 CHAPTER PLAN**

Having outlined the discursive and governmental aspects of regional youth migration, in this chapter I examine young people's experiences of regional-urban migration. In contrast to the research presented in chapters two and three, this aspect of youth migration has attracted considerable media and research attention (Jones 1995, 1999a, 1999b; Ní Laoire 2000; Garasky 2001; Molgat 2002; Wu and Yao 2003). In addition, the broad field of identity or subject formation has been granted extensive treatment in recent sociological writing (Giddens 1991; Bauman 1995; Rose 1996; Hall 1996; Branaman 2001). Consequently, I have chosen to focus on one particular dimension within young people's experiences of leaving home – how young people negotiate the increasing gulf between themselves, their families, their peers and, more abstractly, their home community after leaving their childhood home. This analysis complements the former analyses in that it details the specific ways in which young people respond to and negotiate the various discursive and governmental terrains that prevail in modern life. Through my interview material, I trace the lines between the particular discursive formations and policy frameworks that consolidated on the NW Coast in the 1990s, and young people's responses to and their views about these wider developments and their own situation.

This analysis of young people's experiences of spatial and social mobility is divided into four key sections: an analytical framework for studying 'youth, mobility and subjectivity'; an overview of my research methods; the results of my analysis of the experiences of young people from the Coast; and a summary of the chapter. Within my analysis, I detail: young people's views on regional migration; their experiences of leaving, returning or staying at home; and the strategies they employ to manage emerging differences (spatial, generational, and cultural) between themselves and their family and their peers. I also examine how young people negotiate and respond to historical and cultural injunctions (presented in

earlier chapters) to be a particular sort of person – a Coaster, an achiever, an educated, skilled worker, a family person, and a ‘good mate’.

## **4.1 YOUTH, MOBILITY AND SUBJECTIVITY**

Throughout section 4.2, I discuss sociological literature that has assisted me in the formulation of my analysis of young people’s experiences of regional youth migration. I introduce this section with a general overview of recent sociological debates centred on identity and subject formation. Here I specify two distinct versions of identity used in contemporary research: a ‘periodised’ understanding of the self and a ‘performative’ understanding of the self. I conclude this section, by arguing for the application of a ‘performative’ understanding of the self within my analysis. This approach is in contrast to much contemporary research on youth mobility, which has typically relied on a ‘periodised’ view of the self.

### **4.1.1 Sociological accounts of subjectivity**

Early sociological writing has often been viewed as a revolt against individualism; an individualism articulated in the writings of the Scottish philosophers of the eighteenth century (such as Francis Hutcheson, David Hume and Adam Smith) and embedded in the political and industrial revolutions of that period (Nisbet 1967: 7). As Nisbet (1967: 8) notes the sociological approach detailed in the writings of Karl Marx, Max Weber, Emile Durkheim and Ferdinand Tönnies took shape in an era characterised by:

... the reaction of traditionalism against analytic reason; of communalism against individualism; and of the non-rational against the purely rational.

This early tendency has carried over to present distinctions between the discipline of psychology and the discipline of sociology, with the former centred on the study of the mind, and the latter centred on the study of society. Despite sociology’s enduring preoccupation with collectivities, the arbitrary separation between people, groups and organisations was recognised early on within the sociological tradition as somewhat misleading. Accordingly, the interplay between people, organisations and moral frameworks became a central focus of sociological investigation [see for example, the work of Emile Durkheim (1893/1964), Max Weber (1958) and Norbert Elias (1938/1991)], as did the individual itself [see for example, the work of Georg Simmel (1971), George Herbert Mead (1934) and Herbert Blumer (1969)] as sociologists found psychological models of the

'interior mind' and economic models of the 'rational actor' wanting. In place, sociologists have largely argued for a 'collective' or 'situated' version of the self, one that is formed through the day-to-day interactions with other people, and they have argued fervently over the relationship between the individual and society or rather between people's agency (their actions and choices) and societal structures.

My intention is not to revisit these classical debates, but rather to focus on recent revisions of early sociological accounts of the self, first articulated in the work of Simmel (1971) and most comprehensively developed by Mead (1934) and later Blumer (1969). I open with a general discussion of how the question of the self is currently being redefined, and I then turn to two quite distinctive contemporary versions of the self. First, I outline the work of Anthony Giddens (1991), Ulrich Beck (1992; Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996) and Zygmunt Bauman (1995, 2000, 2001) who have been at the forefront of specifying the key tenets of the new modern self, one that complements these post-industrial, late-modern, consumerist times. Second, I outline the work of those who have also called for an updated approach to making sense of the self, but who have not specified what this self might look like. Instead, these writers have emphasised the doing of self, that is the ways in which the self is performed or enacted through specific practices. This approach resonates with both earlier accounts of everyday interactions specified in Erving Goffman's work (1959/1971, 1963/1974) and later accounts of self-regulation and self-fashioning of the self, which appear in Foucault's writing (1986, 1988).

### ***Rethinking the self***

As many have observed previously, there has been an explosion of writing not only on the question of 'community', but also its counterpart 'the self in recent times (Rose 1996: 294; Hall 1996: 1; Bauman 1995: 81). Although both these themes are sociological staples, the micro-sociological tradition, in which questions of the self took centre stage, reached a hiatus in the 1960s and 1970s as sociologists increasingly turned towards quantitative descriptions of the social order and as structuralism rose to prominence in academic debate. However, by the late 1980s 'the self' had made a surprising comeback, with renewed enthusiasm for interpretative, qualitative methods and the type of detailed casework associated with the Chicago school during the interwar years. Notably, this return was launched from quite diverse intellectual corners, including a revamped symbolic interactionism (Denzin 1992), the new theoretical trajectories of post-modernism and post-structuralism (Hall 1996), and the political revisions outlined in post-colonial and feminist writing (Mohanty, Russo and Torres 1991), and it coincided with historical developments

such as the rise of a new identity politics centred on race, gender and sexuality, advances in technology and communication, and, more generally, processes of globalisation (Calhoun 1994; Turkle 1995; Haraway 1991; Waters 1995). Accordingly, contemporary writing on the self does not represent a discrete and continuous dialogue. Instead, there are some common points of agreement among contemporary theoreticians of the self, which constitute a loosely coherent 'rethinking' of the version of the self that prevailed in academic writing in the early part of the twentieth century.

In general, contemporary revisions of the self share in common the philosophical assumptions that have underpinned the recent turn away from post-Cartesian Western metaphysics (as outlined in chapter one). Such a turn has focused attention on the limits of modern rationality and scientific progress, and it has led to greater recognition of the instability of major binary categories deployed within the physical and social sciences (e.g. male/female, nature/culture, humans/non-humans); categories that have previously been assumed to be universal and natural (Foucault 1966/2002; Haraway 1991; Latour 1993; Bhabha 1994; Laclau 1994). In view of this philosophical turn, contemporary social theory offers three important revisions of earlier accounts of the self. First, recent commentators have argued in favour of dispensing with essentialist and universalistic accounts of identity, in which, for example, the feminine is perceived foremost as a naturalistic category as opposed to an historical construct (Butler 1990; Haraway 1991: 155-161; Grosz 1994). They suggest that such accounts inaccurately depict a socially constructed exterior and a given interior self, and they obscure the historically contingent nature of particular identities. Accordingly, the self is no longer viewed as a fixed and stable referent, but rather the self is "strategic and positional" (Hall 1996: 3) and it is enacted in particular localities, rather than being codified *a priori*. Secondly, recent commentators have criticised the assumption of a contained and coherent self, and in its place they have sought recognition for multi-vocal, fragmented and hybrid identities, in which the self is viewed as a necessarily open-ended and incomplete project (Hall 1996: 4). And, thirdly, there is a particular emphasis on language within recent accounts, as commentators seek to displace the 'unmediated self' with an understanding of the self as constructed within particular discursive formations and practices and enmeshed within modalities of power (Hall 1996: 4).

The study of technology and identity within the social sciences has been particularly important in clarifying these issues. As psychologist Sherry Turkle (1995: 17) observes the internet provides an ideal forum for "bringing philosophy down to earth"; that is, for making practical sense of recent theoretical accounts of identity. In her extensive work on identity in the age of the internet, Turkle (1995: 15) describes the way in which her commonsense

view of herself as an autonomous ego was thoroughly revised in the light of her experiences on the internet and as a MUD (Multi-User Domain) player:

In my computer-mediated worlds, the self is multiple, fluid, and constituted in interaction with machine connections; it is made and transformed by language; sexual congress is an exchange of signifiers; and understanding follows from navigation and tinkering rather than analysis. And in the machine-generated world of MUDs, I meet characters who put me in a new relationship with my own identity.

Turkle (1995: 14) notes that the internet has opened up new possibilities for not only experimenting with a parade of different identities, trying one on after the other, but rather the internet – through its windows interface – enables people to experience multiple identities and multiple lives. She also recognises that the internet challenges the traditional separation between the creators and users of technology and technology itself (Turkle 1995: 21). For Turkle (1995: 264), the self is viewed as “multiplicitous, flexible, and ever in process”.

Although I have sketched a broad shift in how sociologists view the self, there remains a wide range of contemporary views on the self. In the following section, I examine two distinct trajectories that have been particularly influential within the discipline of sociology: one centred on what constitutes the ‘late modern self’ and one centred on a ‘performative’ account of contemporary selves.

### ***Modernity and fragmented selves***

One of the primary tasks of sociologists engaged with questions of identity over the past decade has been to describe what is distinctive and unique about late or post-modern selves, as opposed to modern or traditional selves. This project has been tackled by several notable sociologists — Giddens, Bauman and Beck — who have each sought to understand both the contours of late modern society and the ‘modes of being’ to which such a society has given rise. These writers have put forward several complementary descriptions or theories of late modern society and the late modern self centred on the assumption that society has undergone fundamental and seemingly irreversible changes in the later part of the twentieth century. These changes are largely linked to technological advances, particularly in the area of transport and communication, the internationalisation of financial and labour markets, and the transference of local cultures across national borders. In their accounts, the late or post-modern age is depicted as a complex and fragmented place, in which traditional notions of space and time have collapsed (Giddens 1991) and unifying institutions and rituals have

dissolved (Bauman 2000). With the declining influence of traditional practices in everyday life, people are said to be increasingly seeking out and experimenting with a vast range of identities and lifestyle options.

While sociologists who support a periodised version of the self do not speak with one voice, there are three major themes that recur within their work: the proliferation of possible identities, which in turn has given rise to the 'reflexive' self; the democratisation of identity formation; and the dangers and inherent risks involved in individual biography-making or self-determination. In regards to the first theme, it is assumed that there has been an expansion of possible 'life worlds' or 'sub-cultures' which people can opt in or out of, just as there are a range of brands, products and lifestyle options which people can 'try-on' and experiment with before settling on a particular version of 'who they are' (Giddens 1991: 20). Moreover, this experimenting and moving between identities is viewed not so much as a means to an end, but rather an ongoing feature of post-modern selfhood whereby people are more interested in evading fixed referents and keeping their multi-vocal identities in play, rather than seeking a final authentic, stable and bound picture of themselves (Bauman 1995: 91). For Giddens, one of the distinguishing features of the late modern self is that she is 'reflexive', that is, she is constantly engaged in the process of constructing or narrating her identity, and she is endlessly weighing up the consequences of particular actions and reviewing her choices in the light of new information or knowledge.

The second theme, the democratisation of identity, has been developed particularly in the work of Bauman (2001: 144-5) and Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1996: 3). These writers have argued that in modern times identity was more often than not inherited or bestowed upon the individual, and that such individuals typically shared their allotted identity with neighbours and colleagues. In contrast, people living in late modern times are able to temporarily discard these handed-down statuses of class, gender and ethnicity in the pursuit of alternative identities centred on the consumption of particular brands, products and lifestyle options. With the weakening of old ties and statuses, the once bourgeois privilege of being able to lead a life of one's own is now available to an ever-increasing number of people (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996: 33). The democratic promise of the late modern age is that more and more people are able to build a complex, multi-faceted and moving picture of 'who they are', rather than being viewed through the singular prism of class.

Although commentators celebrate the democratic tendencies of late modernity, they have also identified new concerns that have arisen in recent times. In periodised accounts of the self, such reservations relate primarily to the increased risks and dangers associated with self-determination, and the anxiety induced by the constant monitoring and scrutinising of

the self. For Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1996), the self-management of identity offers individuals a new horizon of possibilities and pleasures, but it also charges the individual with the responsibility to make choices. Accordingly it is the individual who must wear the consequences of such choices. They describe this trade-off between personal autonomy and security:

The do-it-yourself biography is always a 'risk biography', indeed a 'tightrope biography', a state of permanent (partly overt, partly concealed) endangerment. The façade of prosperity, consumption, glitter can often mask the nearby precipice. The wrong choice of career or just the wrong field, compounded by the downward spiral of private misfortune, divorce, illness, the repossessed home – all this is called merely bad luck. Such cases bring into the open what was always secretly on the cards: the do-it-yourself biography can swiftly become the breakdown biography (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1996: 26).

Giddens (1991: 80) raises a further concern for post-modern selves. While the individual has an unprecedented range of advice columns, manuals and experts which he may consult about these identity and lifestyle choices, in these post-modern, non-foundational times, it is not clear which of these knowledges is most valuable and hence which advice he should give credence to.

Notably, the question of mobility has received considerable attention within periodised accounts of identity. For these writers, mobility is inscribed within their periodised schema in the sense that late modern times are accompanied by an intensification and acceleration of mobility; that is, late modern citizens are more likely to be socially, cultural and geographically mobile as attachment to particular institutions, places and communities breaks down (Beck 1992: 97-99; Bauman 1995: 91). In contrast to a pre-modern and modern period, in which there were considerable restrictions on the capacity of people to move out of the station that they had inherited, the late modern period has witnessed the dismantling of traditional institutions and the proliferation of competing communities of association, which have in turn provided new pathways and possibilities for social and cultural mobility. In periodised accounts of identity, late modern times are associated with increasing fluidity, mutability, flexibility and uncertainty, and an unprecedented separation between space and time (Giddens 1991: 16). This latter phenomenon is said to have had two contradictory effects: first, a globalising tendency whereby we identify with a global community and make sense of the world increasingly through a uniform framework; and, second, an individualising tendency whereby each of us is obliged to live an autobiographical life, constantly making choices about lifestyle and scripting our lives.



Among these writers, Bauman has enunciated the link between socio-spatial mobility, identity and late modernity most explicitly. According to Bauman (2001: 146), "being on the road has become the permanent way of life". In his periodised account of identity Bauman (1995: 81) distinguishes between an earlier time in which a person's identity was fixed and durable, and recent times when a person's identity has become much more fluid and ephemeral:

... if the *modern* 'problem of identity' was how to construct an identity and keep it solid and stable, the *postmodern* 'problem of identity' is primarily how to avoid fixation and keep the options open.

In order to illustrate this shift, Bauman provides his audience with several recognisable figures, which he argues represent modern and post-modern types. For Bauman (1995: 87), the archetypal modern citizen is best represented by the image of the pilgrim, a person whose life project is "directional, continuous and unbendable". In his view, the pilgrim is associated with commitment and permanence:

Pilgrims had a stake in the solidity of the world they walked; in a kind of world in which one can tell life as a continuous story, a 'sense-making' story, such a story as makes each event the effect of the event before and the cause of the event after, each age a station on the road pointing towards fulfilment (Bauman 1995: 87).

Today, however, the world is no longer "hospitable to pilgrims" (Bauman 1995: 88); instead the times suit those who are comfortable with constant renewal and change. Accordingly, Bauman (1995: 95-98) describes four successors to the modern pilgrim: the stroller, the vagabond, the tourist, and the player. In contrast to the purposeful journeying of the pilgrim, these post-modern types are highly adaptable and mobile. For instance, the vagabond and the tourist are both recognised foremost as travellers, with the former being a homeless body who is forced from place to place, and the latter pursuing new experiences through ongoing journeys beyond the home. While the stroller and the player are necessarily engaged in travel, they are attracted to instant gratification through spectacle and parade or immersed in the logic and rules of each new game. For Bauman (1995: 91), these four images encapsulate different postmodern strategies for averting "the horror of being bound and fixed".

While late modern people are able to exercise more freedom of choice in the marketplace of identity, in contrast to their predecessors they are obliged to actively make and remake their own identities or biographies throughout their lives, and hence they find themselves investing substantial amounts of time, money and effort in identity-work. Their place in the

world is not fixed or stable, but rather it is subject to revision; sometimes to the benefit of the individual, and sometimes to their detriment. It is suggested by those who support a periodised account of the self, that these are more exciting, but also more anxious times.

### ***Performativity and Self-fashioning***

While the periodised version of the self has been influential within sociology, particularly within the field of youth studies, others have focused their attention on the material and discursive practices that constitute the self. Writers who deploy this 'performative' version of the self are less concerned with periodised and descriptive accounts of the late modern self, and more concerned with making sense of how the subject is formed (Butler 1990, 1993; Bell 1999; Fortier 2000). Although this approach has been assembled through a variety of sources, both the work of Erving Goffman and Michel Foucault has been particularly influential in developing this alternative approach to the self. Despite working within vastly different philosophical traditions, American pragmatism and French structuralism, both these intellectuals wrote against an egoistic model of the self, in favour of self that is shaped externally, in everyday interactions and through discursive practices. The central tenets of Goffman and Foucault's writing on the self are outlined below, as are the tensions between these complementary, but distinctive, approaches.

Erving Goffman studied anthropology and sociology at the University of Chicago in the 1950s, where he was schooled in the philosophical pragmatism of John Dewey and the social psychology of George Herbert Mead. While such influences are inscribed in Goffman's social interactionist approach, he looked for inspiration from an assortment of intellectual traditions, from the classical writings of Simmel and Durkheim to the fields of linguistics and ethology (Burns 1992: 5-13). Goffman (1959/1971) is recognised foremost for his early work on the construction of the self in everyday interactions, which he later developed in response to his observations of the interactions between staff and the interns of 'total institutions' such as mental institutions and prisons (Goffman 1963/1974). In Goffman's (1959/1971) first and influential book, *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life*, he argues that people's sense of self derives from their interactions with others and their adoption of socially approved roles during such exchanges. He uses the theatrical stage as a metaphor to explain how people "stage manage" the images that they hope to convey to those around them. Throughout the study, Goffman articulates a version of the self that in many ways anticipates post-structuralist writing on subjectivity in that the self is recognised as socially constituted, multifaceted, situationally contingent, and produced through negotiation (i.e. subjectivity is a practical accomplishment or an effect) (Jenkins 1996: 23-

26). In his work, he sought to explain people's actions in the meanings of others, rather than searching for any causal origins (Burns 1992: 3).

While celebrated for his sharp eye and his capacity to reinterpret mundane human behaviour in a novel and fresh way, Goffman's work was also subject to criticisms, mostly from his social scientific colleagues who sought a clearer exposition of the philosophical assumptions that underpinned his interaction order (Manning 1992: 51-54; Burns 1992: 357-380). From the beginning, Goffman showed far more interest in an interpretive social science, rather than one centred on causal explanations. He was thus accused of treating social rules as given and criticised for failing to make explicit the connections between everyday interactions and social order (Giddens 1984: 124-5, 139; Manning 1992: 51-54). In the absence of such an explicit discussion, Burns notes that Goffman tended to rely on Durkheim's explanation of social order (Burns 1992: 361). Accordingly, for Goffman:

... social behaviour follows rules which govern the conduct of members of the same society when in each other's presence. ... The rules constitute what he calls a grammar and syntax of conduct, independent of the individual, as in the case of language. Each individual learns the grammatical rules of behaviour along with "learning how to behave", just as the case is with language (Burns 1992: 361-2).

However, as Burns further observes, it is not clear from Goffman's own writing to what extent such a grammar is inherited or generated in social practice; indeed the emphasis tends to vary across his work. Others have noted deficiencies in his analysis in relation to the operation of power (Ashe 1999: 102). Although Goffman did at times offer a stinging attack on the political establishment, most notably in his book *Asylums* (1961/1968) where he engaged directly with the issues of social control, he did not explicitly address the prefigurative and structural nature of power in his work.

Several writers have noted the synchronicity between the work of Foucault and Goffman, despite the lack of personal and professional correspondence between these writers (Burns 1992: 141-167; Ashe 1999: 101). Both undertook extensive studies of the effects of institutionalisation on subject formation or rather people's sense of themselves, and both analysed processes of 'normalisation' whereby particular behaviours are monitored and classified in terms of whether or not they conform with prevailing social norms and procedures are established to modify the behaviour of those who have violated such norms (Burns 1992: 141-167). They also expressed shared assumptions about the process of subject formation, which both viewed as a highly social process. However, Foucault's starkly different methodological approach and philosophical background drew him towards

a model of the self that gave considerably more weight to historical formations of the self and a more explicit treatment of the issue of power and subjectivity. For Foucault, the subject is generated through discourses, institutions and relations of power, which shift and coalesce over time. Accordingly, Foucault is interested foremost in creating "a history of the different modes by which, in our culture, human beings are made into subjects" (1982: 777), which he achieves through his archaeological and genealogical inquiries into the treatment of mental health, criminality and sexuality. These inquiries document subtle shifts in how knowledge is ordered and organised over time to produce particular rituals, state laws, 'truths', or conventions that act upon the subject, inciting it, inducing it and, at times, forbidding such a mode of being (e.g. homosexuality). It is in this disciplinary sense that Foucault relates the concept of power to the process of subject formation. Following Foucault, Nikolas Rose (1996, 1999b) examines the historical development of the human sciences, in particular psychology and its derivatives, and the effect of such psychological knowledge and practice on how human beings understand themselves and, in turn, act upon themselves. He argues that through the production of "positive knowledges" and "plausible truth claims" the human sciences have "made it possible to exercise political, moral, organisational, even personal authority in ways compatible with liberal notions of freedom and autonomy of individuals" (Rose 1999b: viii). For Rose, the human sciences have had a constitutive effect on subject formation, not only in terms of shaping the way human beings see themselves, but also in extending the possibilities for self-regulation within contemporary society.

Although the implications of Foucault's writing and the limits of his approach are not yet clear, critics have taken aim at Foucault's structuralist tendencies, evident in his redirection of analytical attention away from the subject itself towards the historical framework in which such a subject comes into being. They have also criticised the anti-humanist strain within Foucault's writing, evident in both his critique of rational human progress and his desire to displace the centrality of the human subject within theoretical inquiry. Their main concern is that Foucault's conceptual schema does not allow for any reflection on human agency, that is, the motivations and choices of those individuals who in Foucault's world are pushed and pulled into various subject positions (Burrell 1988: 222-224; Ashe 1999: 103-105; Danaher *et al.* 2000: 116-164). Post-colonial and feminist writers have been at the forefront of these arguments, noting the tendency of Foucault to position the marginalised Other as inevitably and comprehensively subjected within a particular hegemonic order (McNay 1994: 76-79). Not only have they expressed theoretical concerns with this project,

but they have also raised political objections to Foucault's displacement of the human subject. As McNay (1994: 79) notes, such displacement is considered by some to be:

... a Romantic gesture on the part of certain privileged white male thinkers who are the legitimate heirs of Enlightenment thought.

Her concern is that:

The stress on the fragmentation of the subject denies those groups traditionally excluded from mainstream discourse the space in which to construct alternative identities for themselves (McNay 1994: 79).

While many post-colonial and feminist writers share an interest in dismantling essentialised understandings of identity, they seek not only to dismantle, but also to re-articulate and re-formulate the political subject through an understanding of the strategic use of particular subject positions within different contexts.

In his later work, Foucault did address some of these concerns in his examination of the technologies by which individuals come to work on themselves in response to prevailing norms and ideals (1986, 1988). Here he begins to explore the capacity of people to craft and negotiate their identities, a line of inquiry which ultimately saw Foucault advocating an aesthetics of the self as one means for people to resist normalisation and exercise creativity within their local networks. Through his extension of the concept of power as both enabling and repressive, Foucault's later work has opened up a new set of questions to which others have since tried to respond. For example, in her work on the performative aspects of gender identity, Judith Butler (1990, 1993) engages directly with the problem of how a socially constituted self might at times evade or subvert social convention. Drawing on Althusser's notion of interpellation, Butler argues that the failure of the individual to identify with, and respond, to the formal discursive category (the subjected status of the subject) that hails them is the critical moment of interruption, disobedience and political subversion (Butler 1993: 122). Notably, Butler's performative approach has provided a new vocabulary for empirical research centred on the analysis of subject formation within everyday practices (e.g. Fortier 2000).

#### **4.1.2 Subjectivity (I)**

In general, contemporary sociologists - either those who draw on a descriptive, periodised account of the self or those who articulate a performative account of the self - share in common a view of the self that is multi-layered and socially constituted. These writers, however, diverge primarily in relation to their sociological approach and their understanding

of social change. While those who articulate a periodised view of the self rely on a distinctly modern sociological infrastructure and seek to document the human experience associated with pre-modern, modern and late-modern society, those who articulate a performative view of the self renounce the basic tenets of such an approach and emphasise the continuities and discontinuities between an infinite array of socio-historical contexts. It is the latter approach that has been most influential in the development of my research program, particularly in regards to its proponents' preference for following the minor, mundane, everyday aspects of social life and their effects, rather than assessing human behaviour in terms of its correspondence with a modern or post-modern schema.

As the above commentary indicates, a performative view of the self does not represent a discrete field or school. Instead, there are numerous anthropologists and sociologists working on varied identity-based projects, which share a number of common assumptions that can be traced back to the influential work of Goffman and Foucault. Clearly, there are major gulfs between the projects of Goffman and Foucault, and yet both these writers provide valuable insights in terms of directing researchers away from the essentialised assumptions that prevail in egoistic models of the self. Methodologically, Goffman provides researchers with a solid grounding in the analysis of people's everyday interactions, while Foucault's writing illustrates the productive possibilities of archival research. Both these approaches feature within contemporary identity analyses, in the sense that such writers increasingly seek to interrogate subject formation via the documentation of material and discursive practices. In my own work, I report on the effects of various discourses and policy initiatives on young people's view of themselves, as well as changes in their interactions with their family and peers. My work is not a faithful extension of either Goffman's or Foucault's work; instead I incorporate the key assumptions articulated by those who promote a performative version of the self. As youth researcher, Judith Bessant, has previously noted, there are four features of identity that are helpful when talking about a young person, that:

- identity is continually made and re-made;
- we rarely have only one role model when we are making an identity;
- our personal identity is always made from materials that are at hand; and
- identity is an historical process (Bessant *et al.* 1998: 44).

### **4.1.3 Young people, mobility and subjectivity**

While the sociological repertoire associated with periodised and performative accounts of the self are both widely used in contemporary sociology, within the field of youth studies it is the former approach that has commanded most attention to date (Furlong and Cartmel 1997; Hall *et al.* 1999; Wyn and Dwyer 2000; Cote 2002; Molgat 2002). This approach has been employed to explore various aspects of youth transitions such as citizenship, cultural capital, and youth at risk, as well as to examine changes in youth transitions over time. In this section, I revisit Gill Jones' research on youth migration from the Scottish Borders region, and I draw attention to the influence of the periodised approach on her work. While Jones' research on the relationship between young people, mobility and identity provides valuable insights into the nature of contemporary youth transitions and provides an important departure point for my own study, the aims of her research and her sociological approach are somewhat different from my own. Accordingly, I turn to a diverse collection of researchers who have expressed some affinity with a performative account of the self, and who shed light on the central themes examined in my interviews with young people: the effects of social and spatial mobility on subjectivity, and strategies for managing subjectivity and difference. Although I commenced my study with an interest primarily in spatial mobility, in my interviews with young people from the Coast it became increasingly clear that migration and social mobility were closely intertwined, and further that social mobility was a far greater source of anxiety for these young people. Consequently, this theme is canvassed in the later part of my review.

#### ***Youth transitions in late modernity***

Gill Jones' (1995, 1999a, 1999b; Jones and Wallace 1992) extensive research on youth transitions in late modernity encompasses an array of themes, including young people's experiences of leaving home, young people's transition to adulthood and independence, young people's location within the housing market, youth homelessness, youth citizenship, and housing and social support services for young people. Although much of this work has been directed towards the evaluation of contemporary youth policy in the United Kingdom, Jones has also developed a sociological framework for understanding processes such as leaving home and youth migration, and she has sought to isolate the factors that facilitate particular outcomes such as homelessness or rural-urban migration. Throughout her work, Jones draws on key insights from post-modern theory, which for her is equated with the writing of Giddens, Beck and Bauman. In Jones' earlier work on young people leaving



home, both Giddens' notion of reflexive biography and Beck's thesis of the risk society are evident in her emphasis on young people's housing biographies and in her analysis of young people's strategies for minimising risk within the housing market. The influence of post-modern theory is also evident in her later work on youth migration from the Scottish Borders region. I briefly discuss this work as it is highly relevant to my own study of the migration experiences of young people from the North West Coast, and it is illustrative of the possibilities and limitations of the periodised framework to the study of youth migration.

While Jones addresses conventional themes within the field of urban-rural migration in her work, such as why young people stay or leave the area, she makes an important contribution to this field in her in-depth study of the relationship between identity and migration. This is most evident in her article on the socio-spatial identities of young people from the Scottish Borders region. Here Jones (1999a) examines how young people's identities are affected by their relationship with their local community, and how such identities translate into migration behaviour. Drawing on Giddens, Beck and Bauman, she distinguishes between young people who have a traditional, modern or post-modern orientation towards their community. In accordance with this framework, she suggests that traditional society is comprised of young people who follow a clearly defined pathway or rites of passage, modern society is comprised of young people who are on a 'pilgrimage', which entails the search for personal fulfilment and meaning with specific reference to the home community, and post-modern society is comprised of eternally restless individuals who have a tenuous relationship with their community. Given such assumptions, the post-modern problem is not explaining why some people leave, but why some young people from the Scottish Borders region stay (Jones 1999a: 4). Her findings illustrate some variation in young people's migration behaviour and their socio-spatial identities. Based on forty-five interviews with young people, Jones discusses variations in young people's perceptions of their home community, their shifting membership within that community, and their attachment to their home community. She concludes that a young person's sense of belonging and (related to this) the family's association with the area are important factors influencing migration behaviour. Jones (1999a: 18) also finds some "empirical evidence for metaphors of post-modernist discourse", with some young people "retain[ing] a nostalgic affection for the rural communities of their childhood, using it as a psychological basis from which to explore the world" (i.e. the tourist), while others "have no sense of spatial identity (and even reject the need for it)" (i.e. the vagabond).



In another paper, Jones shifts her analytical focus from the relationship between young people and their community, towards the relationship between young people and their family. Here Jones (1999b: 156) examines:

... some of the ways in which rural parents may transfer cultural capital to their migrating children and some circumstances in which they may fail to do so.

The work of Giddens, Beck and Bauman is again utilised, most obviously in her assumption that both the declining role of traditional institutions (such as the family and the local community) on people's sense of self and rapid social and economic change have the potential to undermine parents' capacities to pass on the relevant life skills and knowledge. Testing this assumption against the experiences of forty-five young people from the Scottish Borders region, Jones (1999b: 158) notes that "a family history of migration has an effect which is greater than that of social class of origin" on young people's migration behaviours. While class and academic achievement are important factors, Jones research illustrates that parents' capacity to pass on skills and knowledge about migration is largely dependent on whether or not they themselves have been through the process of migration. Jones (1999b: 156) also once again distinguishes young people in terms of whether or not they exhibit traditional, modern or post-modern behaviours:

While some young migrants can be described as 'path-followers', following an established pattern of migration and social class, others must be seen more as 'trailblazers', pioneers who have no family precedent to guide them and who have to map out and follow transition paths of their own making, in true postmodernist style.

In conclusion, Jones presses for 'modern-style' institutional support, that is, more career guidance at school and information about moving away from home. She argues that safety nets are necessary to assist post-modern 'trailblazers' who may well be able to make it on their own, but who are also vulnerable to the risks associated with such an independent strategy.

Jones' comprehensive sociological account of rural youth migration makes a valuable contribution to urban-rural migration research. Like others before her (e.g. 1960s), she wrests the urban-rural migration debate from the demographers in her discussion of the effects of identity on migration behaviour, and the effects of social class and parent's migration histories on migration behaviour. Importantly, Jones also recognises young people as social or situated selves caught up in a complex web of familial and fraternal relationships. This is most evident in her attention to the relationship between young people, their family and their local culture or community. While these aspects of her work

represent an important step forward in rural-urban research, the overarching sociological approach Jones employs is somewhat constraining. Of course, this is not to suggest that the influence of post-modern theory has been entirely fruitless. Indeed, the application of Giddens' work on reflexive biography and the application of Beck's work on the risk society in her study of leaving home both represent productive lines of inquiry. While the former has encouraged Jones (1995: 126-141) to move "from stereotypes to biographies" of young people, the latter has encouraged Jones to focus analytical attention on the risks young people face when they first enter the housing market. However, Jones' attempt to fold these post-modern theories together into a periodised account of youth transitions, and the literal application of Bauman's post-modern metaphors are less successful. First, the periodised model relies on a misleading and simplistic chronology of social change. In line with this framework it is assumed that in a post-modern age a person's life project, their relationship to community and place, and their migration behaviour differs fundamentally from former people living in former modern and pre-modern times. On testing this model, Jones suggests that some young people are anchored in traditional, modern or post-modern modes of living. While this model may well be useful in organising Jones' data, it is highly contestable when historical data on migration is considered. In fact, two of the hypotheses on which this framework relies – that, mobility has increased and intensified, and that people's attitudes to mobility have changed – are not supported by research on migration. Instead an examination of the accumulated evidence by Pooley and Turnbull points to relative "stability of migration motivations over time and space" (1998: 329). Secondly, Jones reliance on Bauman's post-modern metaphors leads her back to a typology of the young people she is studying, and away from a discursive account of these young people's lives. Despite Young's recognition that young people's biographies are negotiated, this sorting of young people into Bauman's vagabonds and tourists encourages a view of young people and their identities as more coherent and stable than recent theories of the self suggest. The classification of identities as either modern or post-modern is simplistic given that identities are said to be formulated in a vast array of cultural and historical contexts.

Apart from the problems associated with Jones' application of post-modern theory, her work on rural youth migration offers some rich themes and directions. Of particular interest to my own work is her observation that young people's status as a local or an incomer fluctuates over time, and her account of social mobility and migration. Unfortunately, exploration of these themes is constrained by her focus on isolating the key factors that influence migration behaviour. Here she generates some fairly mundane findings. For example, those who are most attached to their home communities "feel the loss most acutely" (Jones 1999a: 17), and

that the children of incomers have a "more tenuous hold on community membership than children of locals" (Jones 1999a: 18). When reading Jones' work there is a sense that she is speaking to many audiences, young people, social scientists, social theorists and policy makers. While she promises an expansive, discursive account of rural youth migration, she delivers a thorough analysis and discussion of conventional local policy concerns, that is, why some young people leave and why some stay.

In her research on youth transitions in late modernity, Jones provides substantial evidence about the contemporary experience of young people leaving home, particularly those young people from rural areas who leave both their family home and their hometown simultaneously. While it is clear from Jones' work that the application of a periodised framework to the issue of regional youth migration has opened up some suggestive lines of inquiry, I suggest that an alternative, less didactic account of subjectivity might reveal a different type of correspondence between identity and socio-spatial mobility. Given this gap, I revisit the themes raised by Jones, but I draw on studies which are sympathetic with this alternative approach, and which are centred on the shifting experiences between the migrant's view of themselves, their home community, and their friends and families.

### ***Mobility and subjectivity***

As highlighted above, there has been a tendency among youth migration and youth transitions researchers to either rely on traditional demographic techniques that trace the patterns of migration or to operationalise a particularly modern type of sociology within their analyses. This situation, however, is slowly changing. For example, Ní Laoire's (2002) study of Irish rural youth migration and Marshall and Foster's (2002) study of the migration of Newfoundland families to Grand Manan Island (located off the Coast of New Brunswick, Canada) are both based on different premises to those detailed in Jones' work; namely that migration is a complex, multi-layered and culturally-embedded process. Despite the relatively slow uptake of this performative or cultural approach within the fields of youth migration and youth transitions, such an approach has proliferated in other sites; most notably within research on migrant belongings and the diasporic condition (Bottomley 1979, 1992; Gilroy 1994; Brah 1996; Fortier 2000; Baldassar 2001; Julian 2003) and within the analysis of friendship (Adams and Allan 1998; Allan 1998; Pahl 2000; Brooks 2002). Recent studies within these fields provide valuable instruction on the relationship between mobility and subjectivity. In their focus on emerging differences amongst a formerly bounded community, these various studies provide insight into the multiple effects of transition on both those who leave their regional home or friendship group, and those who

stay at home amongst their peers. While researchers of diasporic communities illustrate how identity is negotiated and culture is reinvented over distance or trans-nationally, those studying friendship communities illustrate the tensions that arise when the equitable and shared aspects of their relationship (e.g. geographic or class location) are challenged by changing circumstances (e.g. the social mobility of one person among a friendship group).

Frustrated by the failure of demographic migration researchers to engage with the "complexities of culture" (Bottomley 1992: 4), contemporary researchers of international migration have increasingly provided a more qualitative treatment of their subject matter. Influenced largely by cultural anthropology, these writers chart the experience of migration and the nature of diasporic communities through their attention to the oral histories, diaries and memoirs of migrant families, the traditional rituals and cultural practices performed by migrant communities, and the social and community networks in which migrants and their children are enmeshed. The work of two such writers, Gill Bottomley (1979, 1992) and Anne-Marie Fortier (2000), has been particularly influential in developing a framework for my own analysis of how young people's subjectivities are constituted within the context of regional economic decline and out-migration. Although these writers have utilised different resources in framing their work and their studies are grounded within quite distinctive communities (i.e. Greek-Australians and British-Italians), their writing is informed by extended fieldwork, thereby enabling them both to interrogate notions of home, origins, continuity and tradition from many angles, and to chart the subtle shifts in migrant imaginings and cultural practices among first and second generation migrants. As Bottomley's initial research on Greek Australians was undertaken in the late 1970s, her early work was grounded in cultural anthropology, which she has recently updated through the theoretical frame of Pierre Bourdieu's concept of 'habitus'. The advantage of this concept, as Bottomley (1992: 123) explains, is that habitus implies a "dialectical relationship between structured circumstances and people's actions and perceptions". This position is reflected in Bottomley's mutual concern for the ways in which people's lives are "defined, limited and altered by migration" (1992: 146), and the specific responses of those who live "between cultures" (1992: 135). Although Bottomley (1979, 1992; Bottomley and de Lepervanche 1984) has attended to the ways in which class location and gender identity shape migrant lives throughout her research career, even within her early work Bottomley (1979: 178-180) insists on the diversity of migration experiences, she recognises the composite and changeable nature of identity, and she details the creative ways in which migrant communities modify and reformulate traditions. Fortier's (2000) more recent work on British-Italians addresses similar themes to Bottomley, albeit within the vocabulary of

contemporary cultural studies and social theory. In her study of the experiences of Italian émigrés in London, Fortier examines the way in which ethnic identity is re-territorialised and tradition is re-invented within diasporic communities. She is interested in the cultural practices that give rise to a sense of belonging among this diverse and fragmented migrant community. Influenced by the work of Judith Butler, among others, Fortier's research program extends to an examination of the interplay between ethnic conventions and gender regulation on the construction of identity among British-Italians. Butler's performative understanding of the self is also evident in Fortier's (2000: 133) focus on how rituals or the 'stylized repetition of acts' cultivate a sense of belonging, and in her attention to the visible and embodied aspects of ethnic identity. Like Bottomley, Fortier insists that identity is multi-vocal and unstable. In Fortier's (2000: 175) words:

... elements of the past are temporary references in the process of creating new terrains of belonging that will be differently re-membered.

Accordingly, Fortier (2000: 175) calls for a research practice that accepts the "quiveriness of identity" and one that is grounded in specific institutions and practices. Both these writers present an unstable view of subjectivity that is best uncovered through close attention to everyday interactions, rather than through the testing of a priori models of the self. Though their work illustrates the difficulties that arise when people straddle two distinct lifeworlds, particularly the possibilities for being misunderstood within either the home or the host community, they also give voice to the diverse ways in which diasporic communities modify and translate rituals and traditions in transit, which in turn give rise to new hybrid cultural forms and alternative composite identities.

Recent developments within the field of friendship yield further insight into the relationship between mobility and subjectivity. As Graham Allan notes (1998: 685-6), many of the prevailing assumptions within this field have been overturned in the past twenty years:

... away from an over-riding concern with the characteristics and properties of individuals to one in which relationships are viewed as emergent. That is, they are understood as interactional, as being constructed contextually and as having their distinct 'natural histories', which impinge on their future pathways, though not in a determinate fashion.

One consequence of this shift has been an increase in research that charts the interplay between subjectivity and friendship, as well as fluctuations in the way people relate to one another over time. This dynamic approach is evident in the study of how key transitions across the life-course, such as obtaining employment or getting divorced, disrupt existing



friendship circles. While these researchers are yet to undertake extensive work on how leaving home and geographical mobility disrupts a person's identity and their friendship groups, they offer valuable insights on the effects of *social* mobility on people's identity and their friendship circle:

... what is involved here is not solely a process of friendship networks altering. What is also happening — as it does more generally with any significant status change — is that the emergent ties are helping to create and establish a new identity... That is, the changing network of friends provides support pertinent to the new circumstances, and in the process, through discussion and other common activities, consolidates the shift in self-definition and self-identity (Allan 1998: 696).

Two recent studies on friendship, subjectivity and social mobility — Rachel Brooks' (2002) research on college students in southern England and Vered Vinitzky-Serousi's (1998) research on high school reunions in the U.S.A — have been particularly useful in analysing my interview material, which canvasses issues of social mobility to a surprising degree. Indeed, many of the young people I interviewed reflected as much on their experiences of social mobility as their experiences of spatial mobility, as for most leaving the Coast marked the beginning of their upwardly mobile careers. Accordingly, Brooks' and Vinitzky-Serousi's research, which broaches issues such as how young people negotiate identity in the face of changing circumstances and how they manage their relationships in the face of emerging differences between themselves and their peers, is highly relevant to my own work. While both these writers articulate a version of identity that is grounded in practice, it is only Vinitzky-Serousi (1998) who draws explicitly on the work of Goffman and Foucault in developing an interactive and performative understanding of the self. In her study of sixth-form college students, Brooks (2002) examines the range of strategies by which students manage emerging inequalities between themselves and their friends, that is, differences in academic achievement and differences in post-schooling pathways. Brooks (2002: 454) identifies five main strategies employed by young people to manage these differences:

... avoiding HE [higher education]-related topics of conversation, refusing to engage in such conversations when initiated by others, concealing decisions and choices, misleading friends, and a pragmatic choice of confidantes.

In contrast to the dominant sociological assumption that friendship groups shift as young people become aware of differences in their social location, Brooks (2002: 463-464) finds instead that although young people are highly aware of the tensions and distinctions between

themselves and others, her interviewees were more likely to engage in strategies that counteract these pressures and sustain their friendships, than to forge new social groups. While Brooks' subjects are anticipating changes in themselves and their circumstances and adjusting their actions accordingly, Vinitzky-Serousi's (1998) research focuses on a peer group in which stark differences in career paths, education levels and lifestyle are well established. According to Vinitzky-Serousi (1998: 44) the high school reunion in contemporary America is not simply an 'innocent' celebration of shared memories among old friends, but rather an occasion for self-reflection, peer review, and self-adjustment. She notes that such 'measuring' occurs in relation to both the hierarchy that prevailed in the person's former school life, and a more generic hierarchy of social status, in which those who have achieved financial success and who have a family come closest to the American ideal. Vinitzky-Serousi further observes that differences between former classmates, in terms of their achievements and their lack of achievements, are amplified by the fact that everyone appears to have started out on an equal footing:

Unlike other biographical occasions...the participants at reunions come from the same area and were all born the same year. This is not simply a technical point; it implies an equality of life opportunities and a shared journey (with some variations) across the life course. Thus, excuses that people may use in other occasions and areas of their lives ...will not work here. Reunions grant us an audience which is a living witness to the past and a benchmark of the present. We account for ourselves while regarding a mirror composed of people who shared their past with us. Such a mirror can be quite harsh (Vinitzky-Serousi 1998: 8).

Following this observation, Vinitzky-Serousi (1998: 49-55) examines some of the strategies by which some classmates seek to manage emerging differences between themselves and their classmates. She notes that one way of "minimizing" the process of evaluation is to hold award ceremonies that do not focus on the most important distinctions such as career achievements, but rather less controversial achievements such as being married the longest. Other strategies employed by classmates involved paying extra attention to their physical appearance and dieting before the event, or simply staying away.

Although this loose coalition of researchers within the burgeoning fields of migration and the sociology of friendship do not offer a coherent and absolute model for analysing mobility and subjectivity, they offer valuable insight, through close attention to specific socio-historical contexts, into the processes associated with socio-spatial mobility and identity formation. While migrant researchers have focused on emerging differences between the migrant and her former community over time, those interested in friendship and peer groups

have examined how friends adapt to changed circumstances and growing inequalities among a former friendship group. Moving beyond the type of social constructivist perspective associated with the work of Berger and Luckmann (1966), they seek to emphasise the way identity is formed in interaction or practice, and consolidated through the iteration of such material and discursive practices. For these writers, subject formation is: performative or rather emergent in everyday interactions; patterned in the sense that such interactions are imbued with a prevailing hegemonic logic or cultural inheritance; and historically varied. I build on the work already commenced by these writers by paying close attention to the way in which young people who have left the Coast re-define and re-imagine their coastal home, the shifting allegiances among those who stay and those who leave, and the ways in which they have begun to manage not only the spatial gulf, but also the associated social, cultural and material gaps between themselves and their families and peers.

#### **4.1.4 Subjectivity (II)**

Both demographic survey work and periodised, modern theories have provided an important guide to the migration experience but they overlook many contextualised aspects of the migration process. In regards to the former, Marshall and Foster (2002: 69) have previously noted that:

Positivist approaches have neglected the contextual interaction of routines and structured forms of behaviour that “practical consciousness” and the flow of daily life depend upon. Consequently, there has been a lack of concern for the problematic aspects of migration, notably the role of social networks and institutions within both sending and destination communities, as well as the diversity of the experiences and meanings of migration for migrants and communities both.

While the collection of studies detailed above illustrates strategies for addressing these problematic concerns, namely redirecting the initial line of inquiry, drawing on alternative assumptions about the self and subjective formation, and relying on an extended range of sources and materials, this concern with context presents the researcher with a host of new problems. As friendship researchers Adams and Allan (1998: 4) note:

What counts as context... is a question of interpretation and judgement rather than of fact. Researchers can contextualise a given phenomenon in quite different ways, each carrying its own assumptions, strengths, and limitations. In this sense there is no right or wrong: rather there are more or less informative ways of creating knowledge and understanding. What should be included as context is an open-ended question, the



answer to which depends, at least in part, on the intention, perspective, and vision of the analyst.

Accordingly, my analysis of the experiences of young people from the Coast is shaped by these new lines of inquiry that have recently opened-up within sociology, but tempered by a close attention to local discourses, community norms and the policy environment that prevailed on the Coast in the 1990s. Rather than searching for novel attitudes and practices among the young people I interviewed, I examine the shifting experiences of young people who have left, stayed or returned to the Coast, including how these young people perceive themselves, their peers, their families and the Coast, and how they practically manage emerging differences (should they arise) between themselves and others.

## **4.2 RESEARCH METHODS**

In the preceding section, I highlighted the influence of a 'periodised' account of the self on youth transitions research, and I argued in favour of an alternative approach to the study of mobility and subjectivity. In practice, this meant that I sought to develop a comprehensive understanding of the historical context in which the young people on the NW Coast operate. Developing a nuanced and historically contextualised understanding of the experiences of young people from the NW Coast was the most difficult and most time-consuming aspect of this project, but of central importance to the analysis. In the first twelve months of my research program, I immersed myself in relevant documentary materials (some of which have already been presented) and I undertook some preliminary interviews with people from the Coast (as highlighted in chapter two).

From the outset I was interested in talking to young people who had grown-up on the Coast in the 1980s and 1990s, and who had left school during this period of economic decline on the Coast. Initially, I sought any young person who was aged between 18 and 24 years. Later, I sought to ensure that I had a mix of young women and men, a mix of young people who had left school early and those who had completed year 12, and a mix of those who had left and those who had stayed on the Coast (A breakdown of the characteristics of the interviewees is provided in Appendix A). While most of the interviewees (12 out of 18) were in various stages of transition, having moved in and out of the Coast on a temporary basis, four of the interviewees had left home and did not intend to return to the Coast in the future, and two of the interviewees had never left and did not plan to leave the Coast in the future. In selecting interviewees, I did not specify any class-based criteria as the

significance of issues of class and social mobility only became apparent once I had commenced the interviews. As I did not record information on the interviewees' parental or household income, it is impossible to accurately identify the class location of the young people I interviewed. However, sixteen of the eighteen young people I interviewed attended local public schools, and eleven of the young people mentioned that their parents worked in manual occupations or low-skilled office work. My impression is that most of the young people I interviewed were from families who had experienced some financial difficulties, but that none of these young people were severely disadvantaged in terms of their location in the housing or labour market.

As highlighted in chapter two, I relied on personal contacts to locate potential interviewees. I used four contacts from different settlements along the NW Coast to introduce me to young people in the area, and I then relied on the young people I interviewed to introduce me to other potential interviewees. Although I did begin the project with the intention of a more formal sampling framework such as using a high school list to select interviewees, this did not prove to be a particularly effective method as the few young people I did contact without an introduction politely declined my invitation. Two main concerns influenced the size of the sample of eighteen young people. First, my aim was to strike a balance between the three main data sources and analysis (local media, documentary evidence, and interviews with young people) and not to rely solely on the accounts of young people. Secondly, the exploratory nature of my research program made it difficult to ascertain how much data I required until I was out in the field. In hindsight, the first ten interviews generated enough to material for me to formulate a coherent discussion of negotiating identity and managing differences on the NW Coast, and by the time I had completed eighteen interviews I felt that there was enough diversity in my material to make me wary of making any simplistic generalisations about either the phenomenon of regional youth migration or young people from the NW Coast.

The interviews with young people were in-depth and semi-structured (Minichiello *et al.* 1995; Fontana and Frey 2000). In designing the interview schedule (A copy of the schedule is provided in Appendix B), I was influenced by the literature on negotiating identity and managing difference as outlined in the preceding section. Instead of asking people why they had left or stayed, I encouraged the interviewees to talk in a fairly undirected way about what they had done since their final year of high school (year 10). This opening proved to be highly effective as both those who had stayed and those who had left could immediately respond to this question, and it enabled the interviewees to privilege aspects of the transition process that were most important to them (e.g. leaving home, gaining independence, finding

a job). The second part of the interview was more interrogative in that I asked them a series of questions about their friends and families and how they continued to manage those relationships. For those who had left their home town, I asked them to reflect on the last time they went home and to describe this occasion to me, particularly in terms of changes they noticed in themselves and their relationships with friends and family since leaving home. For those who had not left the area (only three of the interviewees), I asked how their relationships with their parents had changed since leaving home and how their relationship with their friends had changed since leaving high school. In the final section of the interview, I asked a number of questions about their perceptions of the area, the community, and the problems facing young people in their area. Following standard qualitative research protocol, I did not always ask the questions in the same order, and I often added extra probe questions when the respondent began to expand on a particular theme (Minichiello *et al.* 1995: 65). The specific questions detailed in the interview schedule were refined through two pilot interviews.

#### **4.3 MOBILITY AND SUBJECTIVITY ON THE NORTH WEST COAST**

NEIL: It's surprising. Like I always thought that no one would ever leave. Like a lot of people, like even myself, I never thought I would never leave. But it just got to a point where I had to, and then once I'd left it was easy. I would go anywhere tomorrow, you know, like it's no big deal. If I had money I would just go (24 year old, Ulverstone, 21/2/2001).

Having provided an overview of existing research on mobility and subjectivity, I now explore these themes specifically in relation to my case material. Here I examine the phenomenon of youth migration from the NW Coast in terms of the experiences and perceptions of young people. In the opening section, I outline young people's accounts of leaving their family home and their hometown, and their accounts of visiting home or returning to live on the Coast. While these accounts provide a more detailed understanding of how young people perceive and experience the leaving home process, such accounts should not be viewed as representative of the experience of all young people from the NW Coast. In the latter half, I focus on emerging differences between young people and their family, peers and their hometown, and the strategies used by young people to negotiate the

spatial, generational and cultural distance between themselves and their parents and peers. Throughout my discussion, I reflect on the effect of local expectations and cultural norms (i.e. those that relate to who a young person from the Coast should be) on young people's lives.

#### **4.3.1 Young people's experiences of leaving home**

As highlighted previously, life on the Coast in the 1990s was not easy. Changes in the international economy combined with the dramatic shift in Australian governance translated into record levels of unemployment on the Coast (ABS 1990-1999). The young people I interviewed left school on the tail end of these difficult times and during a period in which youth out-migration from the NW Coast and from Tasmania in general had accelerated. Between 2000 and 2001, 17.3% of young people aged between 18 and 24 years left the NW Coast, and, of those who had left, 47.2% headed to the mainland, 30.3% moved to Launceston, and 21.7% moved to Hobart (ABS 2002). Unlike the increasing number of young Australians who are delaying their departure from the parental home (Hillman and Marks 2002: 31), most of the young people I interviewed (14 of 18) had left home on the completion of high school. Moreover, these young people faced the prospect of leaving school, leaving the family home, and leaving their hometown simultaneously. Accordingly, when recalling their experiences of leaving home young people reflected on:

- how they managed the school to work (or further study) transition;
- how they managed the process of leaving their parental home and their hometown; and
- their early responses to such transitions.

#### ***Beyond high school***

The transition from school to work has changed dramatically over the past fifty years (Wyn and White 1997). With the steady increase in high school retention rates and the expansion of higher education and training opportunities, the journey from study to work is now more likely to entail a series of transitions from high school to post-secondary education or training and then to full-time employment, and to involve periods in which young people move in and out of the workforce. The tight labour market over the past two decades has also intensified governmental concern about 'successful' transitions out of high school and into the labour market, leading to a greater emphasis on securing a viable study, training or employment position on the completion of high school, rather than simply taking one's chances in the local labour market. Accordingly, employment and study decisions featured prominently in young people's accounts of life after high school, and most had a clear plan

on graduating from high school. Among the eighteen interviewees, eight secured university places immediately after completing year 12, four commenced apprenticeships or traineeships in their final years of high school, and six applied for jobs in the local area.

Young people's memories of leaving high school varied. While some found the prospect of leaving school and pursuing study, employment or travel exciting, others found this transitional period confusing and stressful:

LISA: Well, I guess knowing what you want from life can be very, very difficult. When I look back a large amount of distress that I had, and other people around my age group had, was about what do you do. Is it uni? Is it work? I guess, yeah, that was a big thing not knowing what the future holds, and um probably being at that crossroad of, that no-man's land, I guess, between adolescence and adulthood (25 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

For those young people with a particular career in mind, the pathway following high school seemed relatively straightforward:

EMMA: I spent basically from year 8 or 9 onwards working towards getting into the one course here at \_\_\_\_\_ (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

MICHELLE: So could you tell me what you've done since year 10?

JANE: Right, well I've always wanted to go to university. ... Well um I had a couple of really good teachers at high school who were really encouraging, who I think had actually come to \_\_\_\_\_ because that they wanted to encourage working class kids to go on to further education and so they spent a lot of time with me because they knew that I was also interested and um they pushed me through I think. ... I think I wanted to become someone who other people could you know admire, or not look down on, or something like that. Yeah, so I suppose going to university was the way I thought I would achieve that (23 year old, Burnie, 10/1/2002).

Others, however, were more fatalistic, observing that they had followed opportunities as they had arisen:

MICHELLE: So can you tell me what you've done since year 10?

CHRIS: Well, Year 11 I got completely misguided cos I went to [the local college's] taster day and I wanted to do automotive and everyone, the teachers there were going "No you don't. No you don't. You want to do agricultural", because they had less numbers. ... They had too many in automotive, and like I had good referees and that to do that, but they go "arh no" just because of numbers basically. So that's what it all

boiled down to. ... which wasn't very nice but anyway I got interested in the ag science and all that sort of stuff, and that was alright, and then, before year 11 finished, I got a traineeship in horticulture that year (21 year old, Devonport, 19/2/2002).

In negotiating the school to work transition, a number of young people felt that they were making decisions about their future with little information or guidance:

MICHELLE: And were your parents helpful in terms of giving advice on heading to uni?

LAURA: Well neither of them actually went to university so they were pretty clueless there (20 year old, Ulverstone, 29/5/2001).

Others commented that the advice they had received from parents and educators was largely framed in terms of financial security rather than personal satisfaction. Such advice focused on securing a tertiary place and a stable, reliable career pathway, rather than providing students with information on the diverse career options available to them, the various avenues for combining work and travel, the availability of voluntary work, and how to balance lifestyle and career:

DAVID: I find it frustrating in the high school years that the curriculum and the teachers are so conventional as in to the correct path that people should be living their lives. Basically you get instilled that unless you study hard, do high school, college, university and you know become within the top ten percent of the country which earns whatever, yeah the only way you're going to have happiness is if you go to university and get a high paid job. That's basically what they tell you. And they say that if you drop out of school now the only option you've got is to go into industry-based work and become part of the working class slog for the rest of your life. I mean of course they're not as bad in that they're offering different opportunities with apprenticeships and traineeships and things like this, but basically I think they still end up in the same place... so really they're the only two options that are given to people growing up through the education system (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

### *Leaving home*

For young people living in rural areas, leaving the family home often entails leaving their rural hometown. Among the young people I interviewed, ten had followed this path after high school. Many conceded that they felt that this process of leaving home was a necessary and inevitable step, and something that they had anticipated and prepared for. In contrast to



calls by community leaders to stay at home, these young people felt that in order to develop themselves, to advance their careers and to 'get ahead' they needed to leave the Coast:

FIONA: I mean it's not a bad place, but if you want to do anything with your life really you can't really do it here (28 year old, Devonport, 23/1/2002).

Despite their apprehension about being apart from their children, parents also recognised that the current economic and employment situation on the Coast meant that their children would have to leave the Coast in order to pursue study and employment opportunities (Mother, Devonport, 6/3/2001; Mother, Burnie, 7/3/2001). Some of the young people I interviewed noted that their parents in fact expected and encouraged them to explore the world and pursue opportunities beyond the Coast (26 year old, Burnie, 1/6/2001).

Although some of the interviewees felt that parents and educators offered them limited assistance during the transition from school to work, most of the young people I interviewed had received extensive support from their parents when negotiating the transition out of home. For example, their parents offered them financial assistance, they helped organise new accommodation, they moved furniture, and they provided advice and emotional support. Others tapped into a new support network to help them with the transition. For example, a sports club assisted one young person to relocate from the Coast, two of the interviewees started their university life in college accommodation, and a number of young people stayed with relatives or friends until they had established themselves in their new location:

MICHAEL: Yeah, headed to \_\_\_\_\_. My sister was there so I stayed with her for a while and ended up gaining a job with a company doing landscaping work (21 year old, Devonport, 18/2/2002).

MICHELLE: How did you feel when you first moved out? Did you get homesick at all?

LAURA: I don't think I got homesick so much. My aunt and uncle and their family — they're sort of really supportive (20 year old, Ulverstone, 29/5/2001).

### ***Responses to transition***

In her study of leaving home, Jones (1995: 89) makes the astute observation that the process of leaving home is viewed by young people "as a *means* of growing up, as well as a *consequence* of growing up". Many of the young people I interviewed concurred with this view. Those who had left home talked about how awkward and anxious they felt when they

first arrived in a new place where they did not know anyone. Yet, having taken the plunge and survived, they now felt more comfortable and more enthusiastic with travelling about, meeting new people and facing new experiences:

MICHELLE: It's interesting that you say once you left it was easier to travel, can you remember when you left the first time what was it like?

NEIL: Oh yeah. When I went to \_\_\_\_\_ I was panicking. I just got over there and I remember the first day I was there I was like in the middle of the outback, sort of thing, standing there, and I didn't know anyone and it was hot and I thought what the hell am I doing here, but ah you've got to go through those patches everywhere. You know there's always going to be a tough starting point, but six months later you wouldn't have even realised I was at that point (24 year old, Ulverstone, 21/2/2001).

MICHELLE: So can you remember leaving home the first time? What was it like?

EMMA: I was excited about it, but I'm sort of pretty blasé about things sometimes. I just think oh it's going to happen so there's no use stressing about it. I'll just go through with it. And um it never really stressed me out too much. I just packed everything into the car and put it on the boat and came over, and everything was ok I think until I finally unpacked everything into the room and said goodbye to mum and then I just started organising everything and I think when I finally stopped doing that I sort of sat down and I sat in the room for about half an hour and thought what now. I didn't know a person in \_\_\_\_\_ apart from my sister, so that was pretty awkward, so um I pretty much just went out and started walking around the college and having a look around and um humping into people, talking to anyone. I felt like a real geek doing it, but it had to be done (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

While these young people moved to areas on their own and had to find a new support network, others who had left on their own to study at the university in Hobart soon discovered a network of young people from the Coast:

MICHELLE: So when you were at Uni, did you have a circle of friends from the Coast?

LISA: A couple, about three friends from around this area.

MICHELLE: Did you know them before you went down?

LISA: Well, um my friend. No they went to my college but I didn't know them that well. Oh Stephen I did from \_\_\_\_\_ but yeah he was, he sort of met up with us because we were from the same area (25 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).



MICHELLE: None of your closer friends came down here?

NICOLE: No, not many of them. A few.

MICHELLE: So did you find yourself meeting up with other people from the Coast.

NICOLE: Yeah, absolutely. Yep.

MICHELLE: How does that happen?

NICOLE: I don't know. I didn't think it would, especially considering that like I wasn't even in my year group, but I come down here and I was with heaps of other new people. But I still found myself just going "oh you're from the north west". And then you just kind of all get together and yeah it's crazy. It's just the way it is I think, but it's nice (22 year old, Ulverstone, 15/4/2001).

While most of the young people were excited about being away from home for the first time, some conceded that they missed home and were eager to keep in contact with their families. Although such homesickness soon passed for those who developed a network of friends in their new location, those who were in committed or long-term relationships with people from the Coast continued to feel torn between the Coast and their new life. Three young people in such circumstances decided to return to the Coast at least temporarily:

RACHEL: When I moved to \_\_\_\_\_ for uni I hated it. I'm a real homebody. I love my fiancé and I had been through the distant relationship when he had lived in \_\_\_\_\_. I didn't cope at all. And my fiancé worked shift work so there was no guarantee that he would be home when I came home on the weekend; so that made it hard. I ended up getting quite ill and it was that that made me decide to move home. Looking back I should have just stayed and gone to uni here (22 year old, Burnie, 29/3/2001).

#### **4.3.2 Young people's experiences of returning home**

While young people felt that moving out of home had changed them in the sense of 'growing up' or gaining confidence, it was the return home that brought these changes into sharp relief. Such return visits were common among the young people who had left their hometown, particularly during their first year away from the Coast. When asked about these homecomings, young people talked about their experiences of returning home for a short visit, the times when they had moved back to their family home for an extended period, and, for some, the decision to move back to the Coast on a semi-permanent basis. When I asked them to think about the last time they returned home and to describe what it was like, most of their accounts focused on the expectations of their parents and their friends, how their

perceptions of the Coast had changed, continuities and discontinuities in their relationships with family and friends, and the disorientation of living between two homes.

### *Visiting home*

Most of the young people I interviewed (16 of 18) had spent extended periods away from home or had left the Coast permanently. These young people talked at length about the positive and negative aspects of visiting the Coast. In general, they felt that their relationships with their peers had waned as a consequence of them being apart, while their relationships with their parents had strengthened.

Not everyone embraced the newfound freedom associated with moving away from home. For some it was just a difficult transition phase in which they still felt closer to their family and friends on the Coast, than the people who they had only recently met. These young people joked that they had spent their first year away from home, planning trips back to the Coast — something that they were less likely to do now that they had met a wider circle of friends or established more intimate relationships with people in their new neighbourhood:

MICHELLE: And during that period did you come back to the Coast regularly?

JANE: Yeah, I did.

MICHELLE: Over the break? Every weekend?

JANE: Yeah, not every weekend, but I actually went back to the Coast about eight times in the first year. Yeah and that's including like the two months break that I had at the end of the year (23 year old, Burnie, 10/1/2002).

Many commented that visiting home provided a good opportunity to catch up with friends and to exchange adventures and gossip:

MICHELLE: So what's it like when you catch up with your friends? How is it when you spend time with your friends — has it changed at all?

NEIL: No, no I just, they've changed with what they're doing and I probably have too. Like they probably look at me differently from what they used to, but they still relate like we did ten years ago, you know, we get on great. Like we had this wedding the other day and like we were all together again and it was just the same as always sort of thing. I was going to say they're probably a bit different when they're with partners, but then they're not really. You know a lot of them were with their partners then. ... We still get on exactly the same, but just stand back a distance. They seem to be doing different things, like they'll always be the same to me, just what they're up to is different (24 year old, Ulverstone, 21/2/2001).

MICHELLE: And so do you feel your relationship with them has changed since moving away?

LAURA: The ones that are working and the ones that are my age, like my year, we just sort of catch up and fill each other in on what's been going on and it's not the same depth. But um the people that I worked with, I have a really good friend there (20 year old, Ulverstone, 29/5/2001).

While some of the young people who had moved away from home were desperate to get back to their family home and catch up with their old friends, many observed that such visits had become a bit of a chore:

MICHELLE: I was going to ask you about returning to the Coast. Can you think back to the last time you went back to the Coast?

NICOLE: Christmas time.

MICHELLE: And what was it like?

NICOLE: Oh I was bored within like a day I think. I don't know like when I first got back um I think it took a day and a half to go and visit everyone and I guess to catch up. Like there's not that much to catch up on. They're like "oh I've been working" and I'm like "oh uni" and they're not overly interested in anything I do, like any kind of study related stuff you do at uni, they're just like "oh yeah how's uni going?", "good" kind of thing. And then you find you run out of stuff to talk about and yeah so the only person I spent most of my time with when I was on the Coast was a uni student from here. And so she also went back so yeah but no it was kind of painful (22 year old, Ulverstone, 15/4/2001).

Not only were they growing apart from their friends, but they also felt that their former friendships had become unequal, with those who stay making little effort to keep in touch while they were away and to get in touch when they were in town. These young people had begun to see the reunion with old friends as an obligation rather than a pleasure:

MICHELLE: What is it like seeing your friends again?

SEAN: I notice that no one goes to you, you have to go to them. I don't know why I'm a sucker like that. Four of them live up in \_\_\_\_\_, but most of them I still have to go to other people's places and go visit. Probably not as much now. Maybe it's that my friends at home they stay in and they'll only see you if you go there. So that's usually how it works (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

NICOLE: They never come here, like we don't see much of each other.

MICHELLE: Why don't they come?

NICOLE: Um I don't know. I don't know why they never come over. They just don't I guess. They just kind of. If they go on a holiday yeah they don't come over. Like one of my good friends who lives on the Coast, like if he goes on holiday he goes to Queensland or somewhere like that, but never comes to Hobart (22 year old, Ulverstone, 15/4/2001).

Emma provides a more extensive commentary on this phenomenon:

MICHELLE: Thinking about the last time you went back.

EMMA: That would have been about 3 or 4 weeks ago. Not long ago.

MICHELLE: How was that?

EMMA: Um really awkward. The first thing, when I got back I just wanted to sleep for the first day and a half cos everything is so full on and um then when I stopped doing that I just sort of thought I've just got to catch up with everyone. The problem is that everyone turned around and yelled at me for not having phoned them or contacted them. Yeah, I phoned them three or four times but none of them phoned me back because I'm the one that's left I'm expected to be the one that does all the work keeping in contact. You can't have it all. I mean everyone expects you to do all the work and keep in contact and I just got back there and said "Well you guys didn't phone me either". "But you didn't ring us". But um every time I've gone home like I've been home about six times now since I left and every time everyone just hassles me to go around and catch up with everyone. You've got to see them — like you've got to turn up and see them, and then you've got to catch up with them, and then you've got to see them before you go. So you've got to do three trips for everyone and I just couldn't be bothered last time I was home. I just thought, damn it, you know, no one's keeping in contact with me so I just saw five or six people of my better friends from high school and everything and gave some of the others a call or whatever, but I just couldn't be bothered with it. I thought I'm over here to relax and take time out and everything for a week and spend time with my mum and my better friends and then came home. I couldn't be bothered just doing token time out of obligation, going and seeing people so. But it was really awkward seeing how everybody else had changed too (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

These young people, however, were more enthusiastic about the time they spent at home with parents and siblings. In general, they noted that their relationship with their parents had

improved in that their parents had begun to treat them as adults and they themselves had become more independent and more appreciative of their parents support:

MICHELLE: So do you think your relationship with your parents has changed since you moved away from home?

NICOLE: Ha, better. Yeah it's, I don't know, I guess they treat me more like an adult now. So their kind of like oh you know "you're more independent". And I've moved out of home and yeah they don't treat me like a little kid, which I think is the best thing. Kind of it's more of an adult relationship, not a mother-daughter kind of thing. I like it (22 year old, Ulverstone, 15/4/2001).

MICHELLE: So how would you say your relationships with your parents and your brother have changed since you moved away?

NEIL: Oh always pretty good, but probably a lot closer now cos like we only see each other two or three weeks at the most and so when we're all together it's quality time. So like we're never all together as one like we used to be [Neil's parents are separated], but obviously, no, like mum and I, we're really close, we always have been. But me and Pete we used to fight a bit when I lived here as you do when you're brothers and I'm now, you know, you miss each other and I'm proud of what he's done with his life. He's done so much since I've left it's unbelievable and it makes me look like I've gone backwards. But um me and dad we've always been close in our own sort of way, but we're a lot closer now cos we don't see each other much. Now we spend some good time together when I'm home so it's great, it's a lot better. Don't smother each other all year around (24 year old, Ulverstone, 21/2/2001).

### ***Moving back home temporarily***

Five of the young people I interviewed had moved back to their family home on a temporary basis. The reasons for moving home varied, but for most it was a financial decision. They were able to live with their parents cheaply while they were between jobs or saving towards a trip overseas or organising study on the mainland. These young people felt that the time spent at home brought into relief how their perceptions of their hometown had changed, how their relationship with their parents had changed, and how much they had changed.

In regards to the perceptions of their hometown, there were some who felt that they now valued their hometown more than they had in the past, while others felt that the Coast now seemed more isolated and conservative than it had when they were growing up:

SEAN: I should mention there that when I came back everything's really freaky as far as how you see things.

MICHELLE: Why, what's the difference?

SEAN: It's just that you appreciate it more and I probably notice it more than other people.

MICHELLE: Like the environment?

SEAN: Yeah the environment. How beautiful everything is that you had up here, which you just took for granted when you were here. And you go down to Hobart. It's hell down there compared to what I have up here, compared to what I have up here now and I know that (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

Likewise, there were those who felt that their relationship with their parents had changed somewhat in that they were now more likely to relate to each other as adults, while others felt that on moving back into the family home their parents had begun to treat them like children:

MICHELLE: So what was it like moving back into your family home?

MICHAEL: It was tragic. Um me Mum's a cow. She's pretty bad. If you live under her roof, it's her rules. But I've got free rein. Like I'm allowed to go out to whatever time as long as I say where I'm going. ... My stepfather though he's pretty good. He give me like work to get fuel ... and a bit of pocket money to go out with me mates and free rent and free food (21 year old, Devonport, 18/2/2002).

David provides a more extensive account of his experiences of moving back to the family home and back to the Coast. For David the time at home confirmed to him that he wanted to live somewhere else. He felt that just being on the Coast had had a marked effect on him, in that he was less vivacious and he socialised with fewer people:

MICHELLE: Okay, so how did you find it when you moved back — that was the first time you moved back here?

DAVID: Yeah. I found it very, um sort of like a, I don't know, sort of like a slow death I would sort of say, in a dramatic way.

(...)

MICHELLE: So, did you hide in the house? How did you cope?

DAVID: Well, um I didn't, I mean I would see people that I knew down the street, and people would want to do, but I just didn't want do anything with them, so to speak. Um it sounds a bit odd, but I don't think, it had just become a bit monotonous and boring because I had a tasted something more exciting. And it was just too boring now or

something. I think what you were saying before about how did I cope. I sort of really went into a comatose state and kept waking up every morning and kept telling myself I'm doing this for a purpose. Saving money to get my life back basically. So I was sort of was really shut off from much emotion and excitement and just did my job and came home and had dinner and go to bed.

MICHELLE: You didn't socialise much.

DAVID: Didn't socialise much and just you know tried to stay focused on the fact of earning and saving money (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

While his relationship with his mother had matured, he found that his father continued to treat him like a child:

MICHELLE: So, do you think you've grown apart?

DAVID: Apart in some ways and closer in other ways so to speak. But I think it's particularly hard for fathers to see their sons as grown men rather than still children living at home. So I find that my mother has mostly been able to see okay that I'm not the little boy that was once here, and she's been able to change her ideals about me as I've grown. But for some reason I think with my father, he still sees me as the little kid that used to not look after his tools properly, or used to do this wrong or that wrong, or wasn't responsible enough to do this. I think, you know, that him being in that mind-set creates a bit of friction (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

David saw this time at home primarily as hard work and he did it mostly to save money for an overseas trip. He did, however, acknowledge that there were some advantages of being at home, including the security of walking through the front door and being completely at ease with his family (as opposed to flatmates) and not being under pressure to pay phone bills and rent:

MICHELLE: So what have you missed most since leaving home?

DAVID: I think just the sense of security and the sense of peace that you sort of find at home. I mean yeah probably the security more than anything. I know here, to come home, there are people around me who, the responsibilities of the mundane things are shared with, so life is easier, whether it's cooking or cleaning or whatever they're always shared with someone. Yeah, it's the security. I mean you can come home and it's peaceful and it's quiet here and there's other people around and you can walk home and you can come in the door and relax and you can feel secure. Do you know what I mean? Yes, secure environment. Life is very easy when you're at home (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).



### ***Moving back to the Coast***

While six of the young people I interviewed were adamant that they would not be returning to the Coast in the near future, six had already moved back to the Coast on a semi-permanent basis. Three of the interviewees had a partner or fiancé on the Coast, they had found permanent employment, and they wanted to settle down for a while near their families. Another of the interviewees had found permanent employment and had bought a house. This young woman was less committed about staying on the Coast and she mentioned that she would like to get a transfer to the mainland and perhaps rent her place out for a while. I also interviewed a couple who had moved back to the Coast together and who had found some temporary employment. Both wanted to head off again and do a bit of travelling before settling on the Coast. While for some family ties and the relaxing coastal lifestyle had featured prominently in their decision to move back, for others the move was triggered by a change in their circumstances (e.g. loss of job, illness).

A key concern for young people moving back to the Coast was finding work. While one interviewee commented that his experience and knowledge of the local industry encouraged him to try his luck back on the Coast after completing further training on the mainland, others recalled the difficulties they faced when searching for work:

MICHELLE: Was there much out there?

CHRIS: There is if you go around everyday.

MICHELLE: You've got to chase it.

CHRIS: You've got to chase it and I only got on to what I got on to because of word of mouth. The advertising in the job places [here Chris is referring to private employment providers] I mean they probably make their money somehow, but I don't know.

MICHELLE: They weren't very helpful?

CHRIS: Arh, not really, not really. They give you more things that get you down, they send you a lot of letters where it goes — even if you didn't even apply — “Oh you haven't been successful out of this month blah, blah, blah”. It's like thanks I needed that. They're not very — it's like you've got to be up here [holds hand high] to even end up here [lowers hand] so you know you you've gotta prepare yourself. In Tassie anyway ... it's like people you know as I said they don't have their confidence up here, they're down here, because they just hear, you know, “there's not much work”. There is, but word-of-mouth. Everything is word-of-mouth. That's how I got this job (21 year old, Devonport, 19/2/2002).

One of the common themes raised by those who had moved back to the Coast, was the importance of making an effort to fit back in with their peers and the local community. This was not always easy for returnees, however, as their time away had made them appreciate different cultures and different ways of doing things. Moreover, they were far more conscious of the local norms and prejudices that prevail on the Coast on their return, and felt hemmed in by such expectations. For example, Robert noticed that on his return that he was treated differently, with a bit more suspicion, by his former work colleagues. He felt that they were disinterested in the knowledge and experience he had acquired elsewhere, and that they were resistant to influences from outside the Coast:

ROBERT: Once you've gone away and come back you get treated that little bit different. I don't know how to put it in words. You just, yeah you do get treated a little bit different.

MICHELLE: Can you think of an example.

ROBERT: Yeah, you make a comparison. Um like I was building bridges here, and I was working with bridges up in \_\_\_\_ and I sort of made a comparison between building bridges in \_\_\_\_ and here and they shy away from it. A bit to say well this is how we do it here and that's the way it stays and like I was only prattling away and making conversation, but they sort of took it as well we don't want to change our ways and one thing and another. But it wasn't meant like that, but that's just that the way they took it. They took it negatively and there was no negativity there. So yeah, think I'd say a little bit of a cold shoulder, but it's not really the cold shoulder, it's just they look at you a little bit differently (23 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

Fiona also began to notice that in contrast to the places where she had lived and the people she had met, the community on the Coast seemed particularly small-minded and intolerant of those who are outspoken:

FIONA: Like it's not just me that says to her like everyone tells her she should go, and I guess for people like her — like she's pretty sort of vibrant person, she's very outspoken and she sorts of stands out in a crowd — so pretty much for someone like that you need to go. You know and everybody knows everybody. I didn't realise it was so bad when I first got back but it is and it's like people who put a bit of pressure.

MICHELLE: You can't express yourself?

FIONA: No, you can, it just makes it harder. And if you're in a city you don't have that pressure at all (28 year old, Devonport, 23/1/2002).

Moreover, she felt considerable pressure to be like her peers in the sense of being more family-orientated. In contrast to her former life in the city, she was now surrounded by people who thought it was strange to still be single in your late twenties and that it was natural to want to spend most of your free time with your immediate family:

FIONA: And you know sometimes people just close off. Like when they find out you've gone away like they don't want to talk about it.

MICHELLE: Why is that?

FIONA: Yeah I don't know. It's a bit jealous sort of like. Yeah well you know if they wanted to do that then why did they jump into getting kids and getting married and stuff. Yeah, I don't know (28 year old, Devonport, 23/1/2002).

MICHELLE: So you've enjoyed being back here?

FIONA: Yeah. Yeah, I have. It's been um really interesting actually cos it's like you know when you spend time away .... and with people too its sort of interesting to see them doing the family thing.

MICHELLE: Yeah a lot of people have talked about how people back here have got engaged and started to settle down, would you say that has been your experience as well, that people are forming serious relationships.

FIONA: Oh yeah, absolutely, and like it's really hard to be single here. And like, I don't particularly want a serious relationship, but like to be my age and not attached and stuff.

MICHELLE: They try and hook you up?

FIONA: Yeah, some people do. Yeah and it's like I can't believe it and like my mum! But like it's definitely like that. And then they seem to form all these — like they jump straight into getting a house, getting married and all that (28 year old, Devonport, 23/1/2002).

For Chris, one of the greatest difficulties he faced on moving home was how to balance his desire for the same level of independence he had experienced on the mainland and overseas, and his desire to please his parents, his girlfriend, her family and friends:

MICHELLE: So what was it like when you came back in terms of your friends and moving back into the family house?

CHRIS: It's was just hard family-wise and that. But why I'm saying it's hard now is because I've got to share myself between you know my girlfriend and my parents. My mum's pretty possessive. She wants to keep me home for tea at night. She's always emailing me "Are you coming home for tea tonight?" and I think "Oh no." But I try

and keep, level it out a bit, but they don't really see. One's blind to the other type of thing. I'm stuck in the middle. And one's like fighting over me and one wants this. I can't win. ... Yeah. And then um sometimes I feel like going [whistles] and going for a drive and just getting out of here. And I don't know. Oh a few times I've just gone around and visited some of my old friends and like they're female and that makes it worse. You know. It's just because I just want to chill out for a sec or like stop fighting over me and I'll do it. They just don't see it and they think they do — that's the worse thing (21 year old, Devonport, 19/2/2002).

#### **4.3.3 Emerging differences between young people and their hometown**

In their accounts of leaving home, young people talked at length about the effect of this move on their own identities, and they speculated on the effects of immobility on their peers' identities. One overarching theme was the interrelation between social and spatial mobility – as for most leaving their home town marked the beginning of upward social mobility (This theme is investigated further in Gabriel 2004). The key themes raised by young people who had left their hometown were:

- emerging differences between their old Coastal selves and their new selves;
- emerging difference between their lifestyle and life-choices compared with their peers;
- emerging differences between their working-class parents and the new 'cosmopolitan and middle-class' circles they moved in.

##### ***Old selves, new selves***

All those who had left the Coast thought that leaving home had had a positive influence on their personal development and their sense of who they were. In general, they felt more competent, more skilled, more outgoing and confident, more mature, and more tolerant:

MICHELLE: In what ways do you think you've changed?

DAVID: I think developing a sense of self, seeing yourself purely as yourself, without the expectation and roles of family placed upon you. I think that's one of the most prominent things you find when you move out is that you are purely yourself and you're not. And you're meeting new people that you have no past with. You've got new work mates, you're meeting new friends, you're in new situations and all the people don't know you in a past context. Yeah, it's very useful not having a context or having a past (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

ROBERT: It improves you, your own person a bit too because you've got to have a bit of belief in yourself and take control of things a bit for yourself. You know you haven't got mum and dad there back behind you. So it builds your character (23 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

EMMA: I mean it's probably my mum's influence because if I heard of someone doing that [drinking all day] I'd sort of think oh how terrible, but yeah they're good friends of mine. And, yeah just being more accepting of people. I've had to change as well (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

Neil observed that since moving out of home he finds he is less inclined to worry about things, particularly about security and financial matters:

MICHELLE: So how do you think your life's changed since going away?

NEIL: I'm a lot more open-minded definitely.

MICHELLE: For example.

NEIL: Well it's hard to give an exact example, but just things I used to worry about, tiny little money things or just little things you worry about, but now I wouldn't even register. Like you see people bitching about little things and you just, arh no you just get used to being a bit more flexible sort of thing, putting up with a bit more.

MICHELLE: Like carrying debts throughout your twenties?

NEIL: Ah yeah. I've never been in debt before, never been in debt before in my life, but I come over here and I was about five or six or seven thousand grand in debt or whatever, but it didn't bother sort of thing. Like I never thought about it at all when I was over there — how much money I was spending or whatever. But um, I don't know, I feel a lot more confident in myself now.

MICHELLE: More confident in being able to get up and go?

NEIL: Just in social situations you know, and like financially looking after yourself. Like it's one thing looking after yourself when you're living on the other side of Australia, but when you're on the other side of the world. There were times when I got really sick and I ended up in hospital for a week, and you haven't got your mum there, like you can't even ring her up in Australia you know and it makes you, once you get through these sort of times, you think you know I'm going to be right all the time. Just life skills basically. I grew a lot when I was in \_\_\_\_\_, but being over there it's even more so. That's basically it — how I've changed (24 year old, Ulverstone, 21/2/2001).

While all commented on various aspects of self-improvement, some felt that they had changed substantially after leaving the Coast. This was the experience of David and Jane who both believed that they had undergone quite a dramatic transformation on leaving the Coast, gaining their independence and moving in different circles:

DAVID: I find I'm a very different person for some reason when I'm not living and working in Tasmania. Especially being at home too, makes it more so, but um on the mainland you get more outside influence from different points of view, from different people, and you've constantly got new inspiration and things, and as a person you're growing quite quickly and you have access to all these different people from different backgrounds. Whereas back here everything's just so monotonous and cold and shut off from the rest of the world that you find yourself slowly slipping into this comatose state (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

Jane notes that after leaving the Coast she and her sister worked at creating some distance between their former Coastal selves and their new urban, cosmopolitan selves:

JANE: My sister went through a process of gentrification. She used to do all the things my parents did — like drinking instant coffee, you know, that sort of thing — and then when she moved to \_\_\_\_\_ she started dressing differently, and started speaking differently, and she'd try and keep up with her friends who were all fairly well-educated. ... We were both going through this process, but she went a little further than I did (23 year old, Burnie, 10/1/2002).

### ***Accelerated lifestyle, accelerated life-stage***

Not only did the interviewees notice changes in themselves, but they also talked about emerging differences between themselves and their peers. Among those who had left the Coast, most agreed that they had access to more diverse study and employment opportunities and that they also tended to enjoy a more carefree and youthful lifestyle:

NEIL: I've seen a few jobs in my field over the past couple of weeks [while staying on the Coast], but not ones that really stack up to what I could be doing [on the mainland] so that's basically why I'm leaving. The wages here are just a little bit lower (24 year old, Ulverstone, 21/2/2001).

EMMA: Um you can be much more outgoing and everything because you don't have that constant risk of turning around the corner and running into people you know. Because, as you know, back home everywhere you go, every time you go somewhere,

you can't go somewhere without running into two or five people who you know (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

LAURA: On the North West Coast there's not a lot to do really sort of there's like more of a social scene in \_\_\_\_\_ and more people the same age going through the same thing. ... Yeah, there's more opportunities and more people and you can be and you can think in a different way and not be sort of criticised for it or judged for it. Nobody seems to care (20 year old, Ulverstone, 29/5/2001).

In contrast, they believed that their peers faced a more limited labour market and that they were more likely to be entering into marriage, paying off a mortgage, and spending a large amount of time with family:

MICHELLE: So how are friends back home going? Have they found it difficult getting work?

EMMA: Oh well jobs are always limited. I mean even when I went out back home I bumped into these two young guys and I asked them what they did and they said that they were police and we made jokes about it and said "Why do you want to be police?" "Cos there are no jobs," and that's the only reason they did it. Yeah, people are just doing things cos they have to, they've got no options and you need much more options, come out do what you want and be yourself, but there's just no the options in \_\_\_\_\_ (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

MICHELLE: What do you think are the key issues facing young people who stay on the Coast?

NICOLE: Unemployment is probably the main one. Like my mum ....she works in an employment agency ... and she always says "Oh your friend's doing this," or stuff like that, but um yeah they're all kind of, like one of my good friends I think she's had about four jobs in the past two or three years and doesn't really like any of them, but she just does it.

MICHELLE: But she's quite committed to staying?

NICOLE: Yeah, like that's what she wants, like she's got a boyfriend, she's moved, like she owns a house in \_\_\_\_\_ and she's happy with that. I don't think she thinks about anything else but that. Like I think she'll always live there, like she loves it, and she doesn't have any real ambition to do anything (22 year old, Ulverstone, 15/4/2001).



ROBERT: Um and I can't get over the ones that who've stayed, like they're either married or they're engaged or they've had a baby.... they're all in family situations and yeah, coming, over there no one on the mainland, oh the majority of people over there, like they're not looking at settling down 'til their 28, 29, you know, early thirties. And then you know young people here you know 21, 22 and they've had a baby. .... Um — yeah they sort of tend to settle down here a lot earlier. So that was a bit scary. I thought, Jesus, am I supposed to come home and then start up a family or what's going on (23 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

Given these emerging differences in the lifestyle and the life-chances of those who leave and those who stay, a number of young people commented that such differences had led to shifting allegiances between themselves and their friends:

MICHELLE: So how do you find it when you come home?

JOE: Um yeah no it's fine. All my friends and that are moving on, sort of thing, and they're getting married and things like that. Very in the home, homely sort of thing, which is cool...but I don't feel like I fit in as much as I used to. And it's probably, it's not, because I'm bigger or better than them, it's just I've lived a completely different life for the last couple of years (26 year old, Burnie, 1/6/2001).

MICHELLE: I was going to ask in regards to friends as well — has that relationship changed with friends since moving away?

NICOLE: Yeah, um, yeah like my friends on the Coast I don't have a great deal to do with anymore. It's just like, I don't know, I guess that it's too different with me being a uni student, and the pressures of uni and that kind of life, and they work. It's like it's just two different things and that's just really hard to kind of balance it, and like because I'm never there and they never come here, like we don't see much of each other (22 year old, Ulverstone, 15/4/2001).

Emma also reported on emerging differences between herself and her old friends. She felt that these differences were magnified when her friends from university travelled back to the Coast with her and met up with her high school friends:

MICHELLE: Have your friends changed?

EMMA: Social groupings, yeah, back home my friends were more, I don't know they always thought that I was the outgoing, outrageous one and they were very conservative, but I just come over here and a lot of my friends out-do me. It's a good thing. They're heaps of fun to go out with and they're really outrageous and it brings

out the worst in me probably, but it's not too bad. So friends I chose here [the mainland] are much more different.

... Yeah, I took two friends to Tasmania for about a week ... and we went back to Tasmania and they got there and they were sort of stumped. "Where are we going out?" And I said "Oh you know there's one club in \_\_\_\_\_ I guess that's still open".

MICHELLE: What did they expect?

EMMA: I don't know. They actually thought Burnie was a much smaller hick town, they weren't as shocked, I don't know, it wasn't as bad as they were expecting which was good. But the one thing that was really different when I went home with these two friends, um I had about seven or eight friends from high school and everything come around the same night, and we all had a few drinks together and everything, but I just found that I was trying really hard to include all my older friends, but I was just almost as if I was just sort of socialising with the other two and the others were all getting left out, which didn't mean to happen, but they were just sort of quiet and sitting there and talking about things and we were just being geeks, you know, being pains in the butt, but it was fun and I felt pretty bad about that because my friends are so much more outgoing as I said before. But yeah, they get along with them okay (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).

In regards to the divide between leavers and stayers, those who had moved back noticed some differences but were keen to both fit back in with old friends and retain their contact with friends on the mainland and abroad. The two young people who had not left the Coast (Alice and Naomi) were more dismissive of those who had left, particularly those who had changed and who, in their eyes, had become self-obsessed and "phoney":

MICHELLE: How have your friends changed since leaving high school?

ALICE: They go out more, and they talk about Hobart all the time, particularly the bars they go to. I find it really boring. I don't like drinking and I mean you can't do anything other than sitting and drinking. You can't even have a conversation — what's the point?...Matt went to Hobart to study and we still have a lot in common because Matt's really down to earth, but Jen has changed. She only talks about herself (20 year old, Ulverstone, 30/10/2001).

### ***Working culture, working lives***

Most of the young people I interviewed noted that the people that they had met during their travels and the places that they had lived in were vastly different to the Coast and the Coastal community. This observation was repeated by: those who moved to Hobart as well

as those who travelled overseas; those who moved to other rural areas and those who lived in big cities; and those who were working and those who were studying at university. I asked them all what it was that was so different about the Coast. Few held back. For those who had moved around Australia, they felt that compared to mainlanders, Coastal people lacked self-assuredness and confidence. For those who had headed overseas, they remembered Coastal people as being more insular, suspicious of foreigners, conservative, and resistant to different ways of doing things. And for those who had enrolled at university, they felt that their new educated and middle-class friends were not at all like their families, in the sense that their families were said to be focused on job security, minor disputes and saving money, as opposed to exploring different and creative ideas and having fun:

MICHELLE: So how would you describe the community of \_\_\_\_\_?

DAVID: Oh um, conservative, extremely conservative. Um I'd say \_\_\_\_\_ as a community is made up of a lot of older people. I think percentage wise it is quite high as far as the older people of the population. Um it really is a working class community I think that these are the people who are usually quite happy in going to work in industry-based jobs and providing for their family and their mortgages and living that industry-based life basically. What I would say really defines the \_\_\_\_\_ community is that is a working class community with conservative views upon life. Um, yeah, I don't know. It's hard to define I think.

MICHELLE: How do you see yourself as different from others in the community?

DAVID: Um, ha ha. I myself am someone who's not satisfied and never would be satisfied with a conventional way of living, way of life, being part of the industry based system. Um I wouldn't be happy working just to save to pay off the house and to raise the family or whatever, that's not for me. For me, and I think in growing numbers for a lot of people, that's not satisfying me anymore I need something more um more of a challenge in life both physically and emotionally and spiritually and mentally. And um I think basically it's just the pursuit of happiness (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

MICHELLE: So your impressions on returning home — you said that you didn't think things had changed that much — what about for young people on the Coast do you think times are better or worse?

CHRIS: Nah it hasn't changed. I've just changed my perspective. ... People in Tassie they think they know a lot more than what they do. Like, just for example, they'll see someone and they say they can't be so good at something, whereas you

don't get that on the mainland. You don't get that anywhere else I've been. That is one of the few problems that I don't like about this place.

MICHELLE: Like sort of cutting down the tall poppy that kind of thing? Like underestimating what people could be or do?

CHRIS: Exactly. And they take too much notice of other people. They really do because you see them. You just stop and think about it one day, you just watch how people drive along in their car and look at the side all the time. On the mainland it's straight ahead. ... Yeah, I used to do it up in Sydney. I used to drive my mate wild. He used to just go "Stop looking outside" and I was like "Oh yeah sorry man" (21 year old, Devonport, 19/2/2002).

As highlighted in chapter three, university was one source of misunderstanding. Most of the young people I interviewed were the first in their family to attend university and while parents and peers were supportive of their achievements, they felt that they were not interested in what they did there and they didn't understand the demands of student life.

Those who had travelled overseas had a similar experience in that their families and many of their friends had not been out of Tasmania:

MICHELLE: So did your parents provide some support when you headed off?

FIONA: Yeah, no they were trying to get me to stay, but um I don't think they've ever understood the travel thing. Like I love travelling but yeah. And you know they worry. My dad wouldn't set a foot out of Australia. Yeah they worried about me. They were glad to have me back and yeah (28 year old, Devonport, 23/1/2002).

#### **4.3.4 Strategies for managing difference**

All the interviewees talked about emerging differences between themselves and their peers and families to varying degrees. Although most agreed with and recognised this gulf — their responses to this difference and their strategies for managing this difference were diverse. Among their accounts, I identified several distinctive strategies employed by young people to manage these emerging differences:

- affirming shared local values and practices;
- developing multiple selves, multiple lives;
- avoiding differences by dissolving ties; and
- reinventing relationships.

### *Affirming shared local values and practices*

While many of the young people I interviewed were relieved to escape the confines of a fairly “conservative”, “working” culture, they observed that during their travels they at times felt a stronger affinity with those on the Coast than the new circles they had begun to move in. Jane’s experiences are illustrative. She told me that unlike most in her family she wanted to go to university. Although she imagined that she would have much in common with her fellow students, instead she felt isolated from those she viewed as self-assured, middle-class and unaware of the realities of working life, welfare and poverty. Such experiences made her more aware of what she held in common with those at home: similar life experiences and shared political values:

MICHELLE: Ok so can you remember leaving the first time — just thinking back to when you made that step to go to Hobart — what was it like?

JANE: It was really hard for me I think because I sort of, living with all those people in a college situation, which is never good, but um I didn’t like the people in the college. They were not really much like me. And they were all — I suppose they um felt that the people from the Coast were not as good as they were, and so I used to get really angry about it. So that was really hard, but I had a couple of friends there who were also from the Coast so that was good.

(...)

MICHELLE: And now you’re living in \_\_\_\_\_ on the mainland, has that accentuated those differences even further?

JANE: I think um it’s gotten a lot easier because I feel so different to the people in \_\_\_\_\_ that I have gone back to being really comfortable with being working class and I think that shows when I go home because in Hobart it was kind of a middle ground um because it was still Tasmania, it was still the blue-ribbon labour state, the working class state and all that sort of thing, but it was um a group of people who were sort of I suppose, uncomfortable with that working class image and being sort of stuck in-between. If that makes any sense, I’m not sure how to describe it completely.

(...)

MICHELLE: What was so different about \_\_\_\_\_?

JANE: Um well I suppose the difference was — there was a self-assurance that these people had that just didn’t exist where I came from or within me now at all. There was a high belief in their own superiority and their own ability to be the powerful people in society and to be better than other people. And the belief that they were in that position because they were just naturally better than other people. And there was, I

suppose, a feeling of non-identification with anyone who wasn't working in a professional job or hadn't come from a background whose parents were working in a professional job or something like that (23 year old, Burnie, 10/1/2002).

Others noted that although leaving the Coast had changed them and their relationships, they continued to share much in common with friends back home. While for some this entailed "drinking", "mucking around", and going on "adventures" at night, for others there was a common sporting or social club which continued to provide some connection with their friends back home:

MICHELLE: So, your other friends from high school, have you kept in contact with them?

SEAN: Well I've always been an outsider cos I was from \_\_\_\_\_. I was more at home at a community club in \_\_\_\_\_ called the Leo club and that's where I fit in.

(...)

MICHELLE: So when you moved down to Hobart did that change or did you continue to be involved?

SEAN: Yeah I was a Leo at large.

MICHELLE: Do you keep in contact and try to come back for main events?

SEAN: Yeah. When you think about it you're not really away that much over the year. Most of the socialising happens around Christmas and the holidays anyway so.

One thing I made clear to them when I left that I don't want to cut my ties with the Leos cos they're pretty special so I wanted to remain part of it as much as possible.

(...)

MICHELLE: What do you have in common with friends back here?

SEAN: Arh they've changed, but at Leos I just snap back into it. We always just want to have fun and it's pretty easy to get back into it. No one wants to know what you've done at uni and I don't want to tell them so it's fine. They want to know about my results, but like that's all pretty safe ground (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

### ***Developing multiple selves, multiple lives***

In response to the emerging gulf between their new lives and their old lives, the most common strategy employed by the young people I interviewed was simply to adjust themselves, their behaviour, attitudes and conversation, to the particular context in which they found themselves. They understood that beyond their exam results their experiences at university were of little interest to their families and friends. Instead, they focused their conversation on the priorities of their families and friends when they spent time on the

Coast, noting that at times such conversation was fairly stilted. Those who had acquired new political attitudes and new cosmopolitan habits such as drinking espresso coffee since moving away from home also felt that it was easier to leave these attitudes and practices behind on returning to the Coast:

MICHELLE: So thinking about your relationship with your family when you moved down — your sister was still back here — did you keep in contact with them, did the relationship change much when you moved out of home?

JANE: Um it was funny because, although I don't really think at the time, in hindsight it was a period of adjustment, because I had to go back to my family and try not to be one of these people that I was taught to dislike when I was growing up. One of these, you know, snobby people who live in expensive houses in expensive suburbs and do the whole latte thing, and so when I went home it was difficult. I had to make sure that I wasn't one of those people and so it was very, jolted-type of conversation and I had to make sure I didn't say "dinner" instead of "tea" for the evening meal and things like that my parents would say "dinner where did you pick that up from?". You know, what sort of person have you turned into? And I mean I wasn't, I didn't think I was one of those people at all, but and I mean there's so much more to it than just, you know, just drinking latte and just saying dinner and that sort of thing, but I had to make sure that my parents didn't think that I was looking down on them and that was the major thing for me. And I knew that I wasn't, but they were very sensitive about it so I had to be really careful. Yeah, that was the thing that was hard (23 year old, Burnie, 10/1/2002).

These young people worked at retaining a clear distinction between their Coastal home and their new life. Although Emma is very close to her mother and enjoys spending time on the Coast, she expresses some discomfort at the prospect of her family and her friends from the Coast visiting her on the mainland:

MICHELLE: How often has your mum visited you?

EMMA: Mum has come to visit me twice so far. No, sorry, three times. Twice last year and once this year. She's coming over again in about a week and a half for my big going away party we're having, and um yeah it's a bit awkward though when mum comes over because you sort of get used to everyone you're used to seeing here, and mum's from back home. Or if I have a friend from back home come here it feels like sort of two worlds, you know, two separate worlds, and it's a bit weird (19 year old, Burnie, 12/5/2001).



Similarly, Sean expresses some relief that his neighbours do not seem to be aware that he has even left the Coast:

SEAN: Yeah, but everyone just goes on with their lives. Most people don't even know that you've been away at uni so that bridges the gap and makes it look like I haven't been away. Someone asked me the other day what I was doing for Christmas and I said "Going to \_\_\_\_\_ and then going down to \_\_\_\_\_ to look for a flat," and he said "Oh uni." He thought I was just about to head off to uni for the first time (19 year old, Penguin, 12/12/2001).

### ***Avoiding differences by dissolving ties***

For some young people, the prospect of managing emerging differences between themselves and the Coastal community and their high school friends was not attractive. The more time they spent away from the Coast, the more they felt that they no longer belonged or identified with the Coast. These young people found that on returning to the Coast, they were more comfortable spending time with their family or on their own, than seeking out their former school friends. Both Robert and David commented that they spent much of their last trip to the Coast at home, by themselves:

MICHELLE: So did that make it difficult spending time with them because they had moved on to the family stage?

ROBERT: Yeah, definitely. Um, even friends that are engaged, like being single, um threesomes are always a bit awkward. Um so a lot of my friends are in that situation of the few that are here. The few that I see. Arh so that made it a bit awkward. So I just steered away from them a little bit.

MICHELLE: So did you find that you started hanging around with people who had also gone away?

ROBERT: No, I tended to find that I stayed at home more.

MICHELLE: So you were in a bit of a transit zone?

ROBERT: Yeah. My social life virtually died here you'd basically say yeah. I didn't socialise much at all because of that reason (23 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

MICHELLE: So how did you find it in terms of relating to friends when you came back?

DAVID: Um well basically I haven't had any friends since I've been back. Well the friends that I knew from years ago when I was living here. They've either moved on or I just don't associate myself with them anymore cos sort of our paths have gone

different ways. Think there's only about two people out of all the people I knew from high school which I even talk to or even have any contact with anymore. ... I mean I would see people that I knew down the street, and people would want to do stuff, but I just didn't want to do anything with them so to speak (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

They also felt quite negative about the Coast and neither saw themselves returning to the region in the near future:

MICHELLE: So, do you think you might return to the Coast one day?

ROBERT: No. Definitely not.

MICHELLE: Why is that?

ROBERT: I can't see any future for Tassie at all. I think if there was an opportunity here for, how do you put it, that stretch of water basically kills Tassie. It's Bass Strait, it's just such an expensive piece of water. And that drives everything away, whether it be big business or whatever, and without investment you can't set up business, which sets up employment. And it all snow balls. ... I think if I had a family, I'd probably bring them back and show them where I grew up, but I can't see moving back here. No (23 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

MICHELLE: So do you see yourself, would you like to return to the Coast one day?

DAVID: I'm prepared to never return to live um as an Australian resident. I know I'll return to see family, but the only reason I would be returning, um the only desire I have to return is the family basically. To see my parents and my sisters and to be part of the family unit every now and then. I can't see myself ever returning to Australia to live. I mean I don't ever put definites in my life cos I change so quickly, but at this point in my life I can't even see myself returning to live until I'd reached a point in my life where I was ready to retire. Um as far as natural beauty in Tasmania goes I enjoy the state for its natural beauty and I like the rural communities within Tasmania. Um I could possibly see myself at the age of 50 or 60 coming back to Tasmania. I would be quite happy with a little cottage you know out in the country by a river somewhere in the rural areas of Tasmania and living the rest of my life. But as for the forty years now ahead of me, I really can't see myself being satisfied as a resident in Australia (19 year old, Ulverstone, 31/1/2001).

These young people, who were increasingly distancing themselves from the Coast, found it difficult to make the compromises and concessions required to maintain old ties.

### *Reinventing relationships*

While some young people sought to keep in contact with their friends and to place that friendship on a new footing, most emphasised the importance of maintaining their relationships with their parents and siblings. While losing contact with friends over time was seen as inevitable, young people were aware that their families would always be a presence in their lives. Although for most the ritual of going home was sufficient to reaffirm these familial ties, others sought to develop and reinvent their relationship with their parents:

MICHELLE: So how would you say your relationship with your parents changed after you left?

ROBERT: I would say it's strengthened it. I think we've always been able to talk, but I think it just changed because as you get older you become adults, you mature and so you behave like adults, like adult conversations and it becomes a lot more maturer relationship (23 year old, Ulverstone, 30/1/2001).

This was particularly important for those who felt that there were substantial differences between the pathways they had chosen and their parents' lives:

MICHELLE: Could you tell me what it's been like this last week, particularly in terms of how you connect with your family again?

JANE: Well it's really interesting because before I went to university my parents, I mean my father's always been very, very political but never spoken about it and um before I went to university I suppose our relationship was based on the type of things that it's based on when you're young, things like um you know "where are you going, what are you doing", you know, "this is the time you have to be home" or um things like um going out to lunch or going to the movies or things like that, which we still do. But since I've been to university and I've focused my degree in politics, now that I come home I think that's the way we connect (23 year old, Burnie, 10/1/2002).

#### **4.3.5 Discussion**

Against a backdrop of industrial decline and economic restructuring on the Coast, the accounts of young people from the NW Coast illustrate the multiple effects of transitions from school to work, from the parental home to the share house, and from the regional hometown to new urban territories, on young people's sense of self and their relationship with others. While the young people I spoke to left the Coast in order to take up educational and employment opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to them, this sense of

personal advancement and change is both a source of pride and a source of guilt or shame. Though some were pleased that they had left the Coast behind and were keen to distinguish themselves from their peers who had stayed, others saw the emerging gulf between themselves and their families and friends as a source of embarrassment and they tried to deflect attention away from their life beyond the Coast. These young people found themselves torn between their desire to develop themselves and to 'get ahead', and their desire to belong, to maintain their connection to the Coast, and to fulfil local expectations (e.g. by being honest, hardworking and down-to-earth, as opposed to a snob). In the short-term, these young people employed various strategies as a means of resolving such tensions. For example, keeping in touch with friends and visiting home regularly, affirming shared local values, and, at times, temporarily dispensing with newly acquired habits and attitudes on returning to the Coast. Consistent with Brooks' (2002) findings, the young people's accounts suggest that social (and spatial) mobility does present a challenge to the way friendship is practised, and yet most of the young people were relatively adept at managing emerging differences and inequalities between themselves and their family and peers.

Reminiscent of the 'best and brightest' debates documented in chapter two, young people drew a clear line between the people from high school who stayed on the Coast and those who left the Coast. Although the distinction based on people's spatial mobility was important, I observed among the group of young people I interviewed a more marked distinction between those who had started to identify with a new world, new culture, and a new circle of friends, and those who had appeared to strengthen their Coastal identity over time. Among the interviewees, ten of the young people were moving on from the Coast and seeing it increasingly at a distance, whereas eight others were moving closer to the Coast and getting better acquainted with the charms and flaws of their hometown. The term used by Jones (1999a), 'socio-spatial identities', captures this phenomenon well. In her study of young people from the Scottish borders region, she outlines the way in which young people's identities and their migration behaviours are intertwined with their relationship with their community. Indeed, this period of early adulthood (18-28 years) was an important time in which the young people I interviewed were consolidating their 'socio-spatial identities'. However (following Fortier 2002), I would add the caveat that such socio-spatial identities are necessarily multi-vocal, impartial and never complete. For example, some young people envisaged returning to Tasmania maybe with children or maybe in retirement, while others due to quite dramatic changes of circumstances found themselves back on the Coast and were now forging out a place on the Coast, or rather shaping a new 'socio-spatial identity' centred on being a Tasmanian or a Coaster. There

were others who were committed to living on the Coast, but unlike their community leaders who were committed to “preserving the Coastal way of life” (See chapter two), these young people were keen to redefine the identity of the Coast and they hoped for some generational renewal of the old Coastal formula (i.e. conservative, insular and industrial).

Above all, the accounts of the young people illustrate some of the spatial, generational, and cultural tensions that arise within periods of economic restructuring. Not only did the Coast experience a fundamental shift in its economic base in the last two decades of the twentieth century, but the Coastal culture and way of life was challenged by external events and internal ruptures. The collapse of a working industry and a worker’s culture is recorded in the extracts of young people who were either searching beyond the Coast for new educational and employment opportunities, or putting their energies towards the expansion of new industries on the Coast such as tourism or the modernisation of past industries such as agriculture. While the future of the Coast is unknown, the various ways in which the next generation of young people construct their identities and negotiate their relationships with their peers and family – either on the Coast or at a distance – will underlie its reconstruction. Rather than insisting that young people should stay, should invest in, and should contribute to Coastal life, community managers might familiarise themselves with the experiences of the Coast’s expanding diaspora and celebrate the proliferation of interstate and transnational networks that link this isolated region to the global village and the national grid.

#### **4.4 SUMMARY**

In this fourth chapter, I have developed an alternative analytical framework for studying ‘youth, mobility and subjectivity’. In contrast to past formulations based on a periodised account of youth identities, I have relied on a view of young identities as performative, or rather emergent in practice, and culturally embedded. Following this approach, I directed my discussions with eighteen young people toward their experiences of leaving home on the Coast and establishing a new home elsewhere, their experiences of visiting home or, in some instances, returning to the Coast on a temporary or permanent basis, and the way they managed their relationships in the face of emerging spatial and cultural differences between themselves and their families and friends on the Coast.

My analysis highlighted the dilemmas faced by young people leaving school in the late 1990s, namely the ongoing tension between young people’s desire to leave the Coast behind, to develop themselves and to ‘get ahead’, and their desire to maintain their

connection to the Coast, to belong, and to fulfil local expectations. In the short-term, the young people I interviewed had employed various strategies as a means of resolving this dilemma. These included:

- affirming shared local values and practices;
- developing multiple selves and leading multiple lives;
- avoiding differences by dissolving personal ties with those on the Coast; and
- reinventing their relationships with family and friends.

More generally, the young people's accounts illustrated some of the spatial, generational, and cultural tensions that arise within periods of economic restructuring. Not only did the Coast experience a fundamental shift in its economic base over the past two decades, but the Coastal culture and way of life was challenged by external events and internal ruptures.

While some young people sought a new life away from the Coast and a markedly different life from their working parents, others appeared to strengthen their Coastal identity over time. Unlike their community leaders, however, those young people who were drawn back to the Coast did not seek to preserve the Coastal way of life. Instead, they were putting their energies towards the expansion of new industries on the Coast, and they hoped for some generational renewal of the old Coastal formula (i.e. conservative, insular and industrial).

Overall, the research presented in this chapter indicates that a culturally-embedded approach to the analysis of young people's experiences of regional youth migration is valuable in redirecting the analytical focus of youth migration research away from a preoccupation with classifying migrant types, towards a more complex and multi-layered view of the migration process. Such analysis, however, cannot provide a comprehensive picture of regional change and regional youth migration. Instead, further consideration of how each of the three analyses complement one another and contribute to a comprehensive understanding of regional change and regional youth migration is required. In chapter five, I turn my attention to this final analytical task.



## *Chapter 5*

### REGIONAL CHANGE AND REGIONAL YOUTH MIGRATION

In this final chapter, I reflect on the significance of the sociological research I have undertaken on the NW Coast of Tasmania. In doing so, I respond to the two initial aims that guided this study: to incorporate recent developments within contemporary sociology and social theory into regional and community research; and to examine the phenomenon of regional youth migration in the context of regional economic restructuring and comprehensive policy reform in Australia in the 1980s and 1990s. Here I discuss insights that have emerged through consideration of the discursive, governmental and subjective aspects of regional youth migration, the correspondence between these three analyses, and the NW Coast case study as a whole. I also reflect on the significance of the theoretical framework and methodological approach developed in this thesis, and I discuss the implications of my thesis for future research.

#### 5.1 ECONOMIC RESTRUCTURING IN REGIONAL AUSTRALIA

From the outset my inquiry into regional youth migration was anchored in practical concerns about the effects of economic restructuring and comprehensive policy reform in Australia at the close of the twentieth century. This reform, as previously noted, is said to have commenced in the early 1980s with the internationalisation of the Australia economy, and it has continued under present federal and state governments. While early research in this area was directed towards the effects of market reform and economic change on working families living in the outer suburbs of Australia's capital cities, families who were reliant on Australia's manufacturing industries (Fagan and Webber 1994; Peel 1995; Bryson and Winter 1999), research attention has recently turned to the problems facing regional Australians and those who are reliant on agricultural and resource-based industries (Lockie and Bourke 2000; Pritchard and McManus 2000; Gibson 2001). The experience of the NW Coast, with its mixed base of forestry, manufacturing, food processing and agriculture, follows a similar pattern to that identified in existing research. Like other regions around Australia, the Coast shared in the prosperity and the economic stability of the post-war period, but has endured subsequent economic instability and decline since the 1970s. This



latter period is characterised by extensive industry withdrawal and contraction, job shedding and the erosion of stable, permanent career paths, and limited new investment.

As a way of contributing to existing research on economic restructuring and reform in Australia (Peel 1995; Gregory and Hunter 1996; Bryson and Winter 1999; Pritchard and McManus 2000; Lockie and Bourke 2001; Harding and Greenwell 2002; Pusey 2003), I traced the transformation of economic and cultural life on the Coast from the 1980s onwards, and I examined the effects of regional youth migration on regional community life. The major contribution of my case-based research to this emerging body of research is that it sheds further light on the spatial, generational, and cultural tensions that arise among working families and regional communities during difficult periods of comprehensive economic restructuring. Such tensions were evident within each of the analyses detailed in chapters two, three and four. While the analyses of youth migration debates and policy responses presented in chapters two and three highlighted a gulf between those who sought to contain youth migration and advance regional development and those who sought to enhance pathways for young people out of regional disadvantage, the analysis presented in chapter four drew attention to the gulf between young people and their parents. These two issues are considered in further detail below.

### **5.1.1 Regional development and youth development**

One of the key findings to emerge from the review of literature on youth mobility and the case material presented in chapters two and three, was the recurrence of two competing discourses or rationalities within accounts of youth mobility and policy initiatives. While youth mobility has repeatedly been framed as a problem for the home community (i.e. the rural village, the nation) and policy responses have been directed towards the development of this home community, it has also been viewed as a problem for young people themselves and efforts have been directed towards the development of young national or global citizens. As the historical literature review and the detailed case work on the NW Coast revealed, such competing priorities have come to be privileged by regional and youth advocates in different periods and places.

The historical overview of youth mobility debates and policy responses, documented in chapters two and three, drew attention to a gradual shift in the treatment of this issue over the past century. This review indicated that alongside the rise of youth professionals in the second part of the twentieth century, there has been a considerable expansion in youth-centred research programs that place the development of young people at the forefront of the analysis. For example, within contemporary literature the phenomenon of youth migration

has come to be viewed within a matrix of transitions faced by young people, such as the shift from school to work, the shift from the family home to the sharehouse, and the shift from financial dependence to financial independence, as opposed to a problem of regional depopulation and decline. In contrast with past analyses of the out-migration of young people from rural villages in the nineteenth century and the out-migration of young graduates to scientific laboratories in the United States in the post-war period, contemporary research on youth transitions appears to obscure many of the contradictory and competing priorities of home communities.

One advantage of doing a community study of youth out-migration was that it enabled me to explore the competing discourses and policy responses that had taken hold within a particular site. In my analysis of the discursive aspects of regional youth migration, I noted the proliferation of both regional and youth-centred priorities within quite distinctive forums on the NW Coast. While I found that media portrayal of this issue in Tasmania and on the NW Coast was weighted towards regional governmental priorities, and subsequently the dominant narratives within local media were centred on the containment of youth migration and the containment of a particular type of young person (i.e. one who is well-placed to contribute to the economic development of the region), I also found that employment of these narratives was not uniform across the community. Instead some people drew on and reinscribed these narratives, while others sought to challenge and redefine these narratives. Young people themselves felt that they were subject to competing demands within their community. While local media celebrated the return of young 'achievers' to the Coast, the young people interviewed felt that such people were only considered 'achievers' because they had left the Coast and had 'made it' somewhere else. Accordingly, the act of returning home was viewed by some young people as a sign of failure. In effect, young people on the Coast were subject to competing discourses during the 1990s. While local politicians and regional managers directed young people to stay on the Coast and to contribute to the development of the Coast, young people were also concerned that staying on the Coast was itself a sign that they had failed to develop themselves and had failed to be a success elsewhere.

In regards to the management of youth migration on the NW Coast, similar tensions were evident within the policy arena. While the initiative to build a university campus on the NW Coast attracted bipartisan and inter-governmental support, the objectives of regional managers and national policymakers differed substantially. For the former, the NW Study Centre represented an opportunity to address regional decline through the containment of youth migration. For the latter, the NW Study Centre represented an opportunity to address

national youth unemployment through the personal development and advancement of individual citizens. My analysis in chapter three showed that while regional managers on the Coast were successful in extracting real concessions from the Federal Government to potentially keep their young people at home, such concessions also provided an opportunity to enrol regional players in national attempts to manage the problem of youth unemployment at a distance. Although the campus promised to resolve these contradictory governmental objectives by enabling young people to 'get an education' (i.e. develop themselves and enhance their skills and thus their employability) and 'stay at home' (i.e. in order to contribute to the future development of the region), in practice I found that, most often, studying at the local university merely delayed the inevitable move, or it meant staying in the local area and redefining the culture of the Coast.

### **5.1.2 Generational tensions**

My research on regional change and regional youth migration also drew attention to the tensions that arise within communities and among families during periods of economic restructuring and comprehensive policy reform. Here I examined the tensions between a post-war generation of workers, those who remember a secure labour market and a good standard of living for all, and the children of these workers who now face an uncertain labour market and who are searching for a better life beyond their hometown. Within my study, I charted these generational tensions through my case material and, most extensively, through interviews with young people.

Many of the young people spoke at length about the differences that had emerged between themselves and their families following their decision to leave the NW Coast and to pursue a very different life from their parents. For those young people who had left the Coast in the 1990s in order to take up educational and employment opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to them, their experiences of personal advancement and change had become both a source of pride and a source of guilt or shame. Though some were pleased that they had left the Coast behind and were keen to distinguish themselves from their peers who had stayed, others saw the emerging gulf between themselves and their families and friends as a source of embarrassment and they tried to deflect attention away from their life beyond the Coast. These young people found themselves torn between their desire to develop themselves and to 'get ahead', and their desire to belong, to maintain their connection to the Coast, and to fulfil local expectations (e.g. by being honest, hardworking and down-to-earth, as opposed to a snob). In the short-term, these young people employed various strategies as a means of resolving such tensions. These included:

- affirming shared local values and practices;
- developing multiple selves and leading multiple lives;
- avoiding differences by dissolving personal ties with those on the Coast; and
- reinventing their relationships with family and friends.

Although young people were adept at managing emerging differences between themselves and their families, at times moving seamlessly between different worlds, they could not redress fundamental changes within their community. Not only were traditional employment pathways closed off to the next generation, but the experiences and the knowledge accumulated by a generation of industrial workers had also become largely redundant. In trying to piece together a future path, many of the young people I interviewed sought support from mentors and organisations beyond their family and beyond the NW Coast, as they recognised that their parents and community leaders could not help them in making the types of decisions that they faced. For example, their parents had not travelled overseas, they had not continued their education beyond high school, and, in their children's eyes, these working parents placed too high a premium on economic security. Not surprisingly, many people from this earlier generation resisted the substantial economic and cultural transformation that took shape on the Coast in the 1990s, and continued to seek out a future based on old certainties. In doing so, they merely accentuated a generational gulf that had its foundations in the decisions made by company directors, policy advisors, and political leaders far beyond the Coast. This resistance towards new ideas was discouraging to those who had returned to the Coast and who hoped for a generational renewal of the old Coastal formula (i.e. conservative, insular and industrial).

### **5.1.3 Practical implications of research**

My thesis offers those interested in social change in Australia a greater appreciation of: the competing rationalities that underpin present policy measures aimed at managing the regions and managing young people; the contradictory injunctions to which young people living in industrial, regional communities are subject; and the spatial, generational, and cultural tensions that arise among working families and industrial communities during difficult periods of comprehensive economic restructuring.

Such issues are not only of academic interest, but might also prove valuable to those working in regional communities and working with young people. For example, the experience of the NW Coast showed that regional development policy programs funded in part by federal and state governments are vulnerable to competing national priorities centred on the development of Australian citizens, rather than the development of regions. This

type of analysis is highly relevant to regional communities in Australia as community leaders are constantly engaged in a process of negotiating new development programs and funding arrangements. More broadly, my analysis, which draws attention to competing ways in which particular issues are framed and problematised, might aid communication across various groups who are working towards different development objectives for their region and their region's youth. For example, this case-work might assist regional leaders and youth advocates in anticipating the types of contradictions and compromises that could potentially disrupt and stall regional and youth development programs.

My research also draws attention to the cultural dislocation experienced by young people and their families during periods of regional economic decline, and the subsequent tensions that emerge when young people are spatially and socially mobile. Although these issues have gained some attention in Australian literature on social change (e.g. Peel 1995: 145-154), further exploration of the correspondence between social change and social mobility could contribute much to present policy debates in Australia. While both the major political parties have turned away from redistributive, egalitarian policies in the early part of the twenty-first century, they have embraced social mobility as the key to increasing productivity, prosperity and the standard of living in Australia. And yet, there is currently little understanding of the effects of social mobility on familial relationships, community organisation, and cultural institutions. Just how contemporary Australians comply with, negotiate, and challenge present neo-liberal injunctions centred on personal advancement and 'aspirationalism' is a pressing question for social scientists and policy makers alike.

## **5.2 PRODUCTIVE DIRECTIONS IN REGIONAL AND COMMUNITY RESEARCH**

Following the tradition of community studies, the insights detailed above were yielded through the close engagement of one researcher with the historical and contemporary experiences of a number of communities along the NW Coast of Tasmania (i.e. Burnie, Devonport and Ulverstone). However, it was also my intention from the outset to update some of the assumptions that currently inform community and regional research, particularly as it is practised within Australia, and to engage critically with contemporary literature on regional youth migration. I now reflect on the contribution my work makes to these two fields.



### 5.2.1 Advancing Australian community studies

As highlighted in chapter one, the reappraisal of regional and community research has already commenced among Australian researchers. Not only have new post-modern and post-structural developments within social theory renewed enthusiasm for detailed, ethnographic, case work in which research questions are anchored within particular times and places, but there have also been some attempts to extend the boundaries of what constitutes a regional or community study. Here researchers have begun to map discourses that have emerged in particular regions and locales, and to map discourses about regional and community life that prevail within national forums (Mules and Miller 1997; Pritchard and McManus 2000; Gibson 2001; Lockie and Bourke 2001).

Following these researchers, I prioritised the discursive aspects of community life within my research program, and as way of extending this work, I provided a more explicit discussion of the interrelation between discourse and governance. In chapters two and three, I developed a framework for studying the discursive and governmental aspects of community life, and more specifically, the phenomenon of regional youth migration. Within my research, I drew on Foucault's writing on discourse and ordering in the sense that I sought to trace the contours of particular discourses and to map the way a particular phenomena is ordered and classified, rather than attempting to redefine existing classifications and hierarchies and impose new classifications. I also drew on Foucault's work on governmentality, in which governance is viewed as multi-dimensional, tenuous and improvised, and as an outcome of a range of governmental techniques. This Foucaultian framework stands in marked contrast to existing studies of power and social status within community life, which have relied largely on the inheritance of Karl Marx and Max Weber (e.g. Warner and Lunt 1941/1973a, 1942/1973b; Wild 1974; Metcalfe 1988). Notably, within Foucault's writing the boundaries between the discursive and the governmental are blurred, as what counts as truth in particular places and periods is inextricably tied to the project of managing populations and managing oneself.

Using a Foucaultian framework, I considered the way in which issues within a regional community were problematised by locals and those outside the region, and the assumptions that inform local narratives and policy programs directed at managing regional youth. This approach was valuable in tracing the connections between discursive practices and policy developments, and the effects of such injunctions and programs on regional lives. Here I extended my early analysis of the key narratives that had framed youth migration debates on the Coast in the 1990s by considering the way these narratives had informed practical strategies to manage young people on the Coast, and the way these narratives had been

contested on the street by parents, youth professionals, and young people, and within the policy arena by different arms of government. This discursive and governmental framework was critical in drawing my attention to the major findings detailed above, namely the ongoing tensions between those who seek to frame youth out-migration as problem of regional decline and to address directly the problem of regional decline, and those who seek to frame youth out-migration as opportunity for young people to escape regional disadvantage and to facilitate the personal development of young people.

Within my research program, I also drew on a particular model of the self. Following post-structuralist writers (Ashe 1999), the self was considered to be socially constituted, multi-dimensional, fragmented and "strategic and positional" (Hall 1996: 3), rather than individualistic and essential. This sociological view of the self and identity was not central to the project of updating the assumptions that inform contemporary regional and community research; however, it had important implications for literature on regional youth migration.

### **5.2.2 Reappraisal of regional youth migration literature**

As noted in chapter one, contemporary youth migration researchers have increasingly focused their attention on the cultural aspects of migration, in particular the relationship between migration and identity (Jones 1995, 1999a, 1999b; Ní Laoire 2000; Marshall and Foster 2002; Molgat 2002), and they have sought to position youth migration within a more comprehensive view of young people's life transitions (Dwyer and Wyn 1998a, 1998b; Wyn and Dwyer 1999, 2000). While these recent moves within the field of youth migration have yielded valuable insights into the contemporary experience of young people, throughout my thesis I have drawn attention to some of the limitations of this literature. Specific criticisms developed throughout this thesis have included: a continued reliance on the typologising of young people and their migration behaviour within present research; the foregrounding of youth priorities, above regional priorities; a lack of reflexivity within youth migration research, particularly in regards to the researcher's position within the policy arena; and the recent application of a 'periodised' account of the self and social change to the study of youth migration.

#### ***Typologising young people***

A central issue raised in the opening chapters of this thesis was the role of classification in social scientific research. Following the work of Mauss and Durkheim, I sought to draw attention to the way classification had been used within research on youth migration, to



make explicit the hierarchical ordering that accompanies such classifications, and to map shifts in this classificatory repertoire across different periods and places. My historical review of youth migration literature revealed that the scientific impulse to classify the phenomenon in question had not waned over the past century, but rather the classifying was being undertaken by a new group of researchers, youth specialists, and as such the classifications had taken on new forms. For example, whereas in the nineteenth century observers called attention to 'migration differentials', based on typologising people in terms of migration behaviour, labour value and intelligence, later social scientists came to distinguish young people in terms of those who adapt and those who mal-adapt to their new environment. Within contemporary research, the labelling has once again shifted to incorporate post-modern motifs, and the demarcation between young people has extended from a narrow focus on migration behaviours to a broader approach in which young people are differentiated by their socio-spatial biographies. While the project of typologising young people has been adapted and extended, the basic formula remains in place.

In contrast to existing research, I have sought throughout this thesis to avoid typologising young people, not only because this technique has already been applied extensively within the field of youth migration, but also because its usefulness as a device for translating the reality of young people's lives into cogent social scientific accounts is relatively limited. While the strategy of typologising provides the researcher with a quick snap-shot of the world, it can obscure rather than clarify the phenomenon in question by editing out much of the complexity, contradictions and shifts experienced by young people. For example, the work of constructing new typologies can distract the researcher from the host of different orderings being employed by various people and organizations within a particular site. In regards to regional youth migration, the typologising of young people's 'socio-spatial biographies' is alarming in two respects. First, this approach is static in that it forecloses debate regarding the considerable work that young people do when reappraising and revising their 'socio-spatial identities'. In contrast, I would argue such 'socio-spatial biographies' are necessarily multi-vocal, impartial and never complete. Secondly, despite the researchers best intentions it is not possible to construct purified, objective classifications. Instead, theorists such as Durkheim and Mauss (1903/1963) have called attention to the social and hierarchical nature of all classifications. Accordingly, those who seek to typologise and classify, but who then fail to account for the social origin of particular classifications, are implicit in the construction of hierarchical classifications. For example, Jones' (1999b: 156) "trailblazers" and "pathfollowers" can be easily viewed along a

continuum of good-bad migration behaviour depending on the socio-political context in which such classifications are enunciated.

### ***Youth-specific youth research***

A key aspect of contemporary youth migration research is that it, not so surprisingly, foregrounds the experiences of young people. While youth researchers must necessarily prioritise and privilege particular categories and lines of inquiry, within the area of youth migration such a youth-specific approach has served to stabilise and narrow debate. As highlighted in chapter three, alongside the rise of youth professionals in the second part of the twentieth century, there has been a considerable expansion in youth-centred research programs that place the development of young people at the forefront of the analysis. Equally, within literature on youth migration there has been a gradual shift away from the consideration of youth migration from a regional perspective towards a greater consideration of youth migration from a young person's perspective. Accordingly, the phenomenon of youth migration has come to be viewed within a matrix of transitions faced by young people, such as the shift from school to work, the shift from the family home to the share-house, and the shift from financial dependence to financial independence, as opposed to a problem of regional depopulation and decline. This approach has been advanced principally through a reliance on survey and interview data (Dwyer and Wyn 1998a, 1998b; Wyn and Dwyer 1999, 2000; Jones 1995), as opposed to historical and ethnographic casework.

Against this historical trend, I chose to weave regional concerns back into my analysis of regional change and regional youth migration. Although youth remained at the centre of my analysis, I sought to understand their experiences in the light of restructuring and change that occurred within their local community and across the nation in the 1990s. I also looked for continuities and discontinuities between the NW Coast case material and past literature in which youth migration had been framed largely in terms of regional concerns and priorities. In contrast to existing youth transitions research, this broader analytical frame drew attention to key regional and generational tensions that had previously been obscured within youth-specific youth migration research.

### ***Reflexivity in youth research***

Another key theme developed throughout this thesis is the question of reflexivity within the research process. As highlighted in chapter one, reflexivity entails attention to the mediation and interpretation of knowledge, particularly the gap between the work of collecting and collating data about the world 'out there' and the process of writing about this

world. However, within the field of youth migration, such methodological concerns have yet to feature prominently within academic debate. Part of the explanation lies in the applied orientation of much youth research. In trying to straddle the divide between academic debate and the policy arena, youth researchers have been preoccupied with communicating their results to a range of audiences, consequently, rarely have such researchers ventured into the kind of "benign introspection" (Woolgar 1988: 21) that is found within the humanities.

While reflexivity has not been a priority for applied researchers, there are important reasons for insisting that it is time for these researchers to take 'one step up'. First, further reflection on the conceptual assumptions guiding research on youth migration provides some grounding for new research approaches and new research agendas. For example, my account of the historical development of youth migration research detailed in chapter two highlighted the continued reliance on a discrete set of technical methods (e.g. survey data and interview material, rather than popular accounts or conversational analysis) and the recurrence of particular assumptions about young migrants (e.g. young migrants are more intelligent than their peers). Secondly, the lack of reflexivity in youth research is at times naïve and misleading. For example, in chapter three I showed that many youth researchers have insisted on drawing a separation between the policing work of government and the enlightening work of research. While these youth researchers have been quick to criticise public policy, they have failed to account for their own role within the process of governance. Reflexivity provides such researchers with the opportunity to reflect on and attend to their own role in the production of new categories and new expert knowledge, and their own position within the process of governing and managing young people, before dispensing advice to those operating outside academe.

### *Modern and post-modern youth*

A final, overarching criticism of contemporary youth migration literature is the present reliance within this literature on a particular type of sociological framework; one that purports to update social theory, but which I contend repeats many of the assumptions attributed to 'modern' sociology. In early chapters I drew attention to some of the ways in which this 'post-modern' or 'periodised' framework, which is derivative of the work of Giddens, Beck and Bauman, has influenced contemporary youth migration literature. For example, researchers have sought to understand contemporary youth transitions within the context of social change, and they have used this 'periodised' organising framework to test whether or not young people's pathways are becoming more complex and non-linear, and as

such more 'post-modern'. In line with these theories, they have also sought to analyse the declining role of traditional institutions such as the family and the local community on people's sense of self. In chapter four, I provided a more comprehensive review of how this framework has informed present accounts of the self and identity within youth migration literature.

While the application of a 'periodised' framework within youth transitions literature has yielded some promising insights, I have argued previously that there are serious limitations to this 'periodised' approach. These limitations include: the employment of a linear account of historical development, in which migrant behaviours in the past are considered to be fundamentally different from migrant behaviour in the late twentieth century; a preoccupation with documenting and announcing the 'new'; and a continued tendency towards the construction of rigid social scientific categories, rather than attending to local accounts and everyday interactions. The work of youth migration researcher Jones (1995, 1999a, 1999b) exemplifies these problems. Although Jones' has advanced present understanding of the relationship between migration behaviour and identity (particularly through her attention to young people's 'socio-spatial biographies'), the use of a 'periodised' framework within her analysis is less convincing. Following Bauman, Jones (1999a) suggests that 'post-modern' society is comprised of eternally restless individuals who have a tenuous relationship with their community, and accordingly she is able to sort the young people she interviewed into those who are anchored in traditional modes of living, and those who are anchored in post-modern modes of living. This framework is somewhat self-reifying and at odds with historical research, which points to high levels of mobility among different cultures in various periods (Pooley and Turnbull 1998: 329). It also depicts young people's identities as overly coherent, stable and unchanging.

Against the 'periodised' or 'post-modern' framework employed by Jones and other youth researchers, I have tried to construct an alternative framework. Like the 'periodised' theorists, my intention is to use such a framework to generate different insights than the past, but unlike these theorists my intention is also to address and accommodate the serious philosophical challenges raised by critics of the Enlightenment legacy. The three-way framework I constructed encourages researchers to focus on the discursive and governmental aspects of the phenomenon under investigation, and to employ a performative understanding of the self and identity. In contrast to the 'periodised' approach, researchers are directed away from grandiose, historical schemas and universalising theories that can be readily transposed across time and space, and towards the difficult task of following actors,

reading texts, and documenting everyday interactions in particular historical and geographical settings.

### **5.3 PRODUCTIVE DIRECTIONS IN SOCIOLOGICAL RESEARCH AND PRACTICE**

Most broadly, this thesis exemplifies and contributes to productive new directions in sociological research and practice. The conceptual framework that I developed to guide my research stemmed largely from my reading of the work of Michel Foucault, and those who have engaged with his work, and post-structuralist writing. The framework was not faithful to any particular person's work, but rather I emphasised the discursive and the governmental aspects of social life, and I focused attention on young people's experiences and social practices. Consistent with Pels' (2000) proposition that researchers should take one reflexive 'step up', I paid considerable attention to the assumptions that inform present debates within the youth migration and community studies literature, and I drew attention to my own assumptions; hopefully without digressing too far from the research topic at hand and losing sight of the implications of these theoretical debates to the experiences of young people on the NW Coast of Tasmania.

As my research progressed, I became aware of the possibilities and the limits of my proposed conceptual framework. Most positively, it enabled me to examine aspects of the migration process that are not well understood. Although much work in this field centres on policy developments, less attention has been paid to the intersections between societal and community expectations, policy formation, and issues of self-management and self-regulation, as well as the contradictory and multi-faceted nature of managing mobility. The framework itself however was a fairly unstable device, and the problem of where to end an analysis that emphasises the inseparability between 'governance of the self' and 'governance of social institutions and communities' was ever-present. Although context provides a powerful basis for exploring interconnections and linkages, just how many linkages can be traced and adequately accounted for is an irresolvable issue. For myself, the demands of a thesis program and the disciplinary constraints of sociology provided some boundaries and encouraged me to prioritise some linkages and leads, above others.

Table 5.1: A Conceptual Framework for Analysing Regional and Community Life, 2004.

Research Focus	Research Questions	Research Methods
Discursive	How is issue problematised? / What counts as truth in this particular historical moment?	Attention to the historical/ the particular
Governmental	What are the techniques and strategies for managing issues? / How are these employed and to what effect?	Multiple sources Iterative research process
Performative	What are the experiences of those who govern and those who are governed?	Interpretative analysis
Reflexive	Where are past and present social scientists positioned within the research program?	Writing as method

Bearing in mind these possibilities and limits, the conceptual framework that I initially employed to guide my research has been somewhat refined through my research process. Unlike those who favour a strong, sociological project that is grounded in universal laws and static models of social reality, I offer other regional and community researchers a conceptual framework that I contend can help illuminate aspects of social life that have previously been obscured within regional and community research (See Table 5.1). This framework calls on researchers to focus their analytical attention on the discursive, governmental, and performative aspects of community life, and also to attend to their own position within the research setting and the policy environment. The conceptual framework also encourages researchers to experiment with a particular combination of already well-established research methods and analytical techniques. These include: attention to the historical and *the particular*; the analysis of *multiple sources*, in order to juxtapose alternate findings; the reliance on an *iterative* process (i.e. moving between the field and the literature) to generate



findings; the *interpretative* analysis of documents, secondary statistics and interview material; and, finally, recognition of *writing as method*. In regards to the last point, the process of writing-up my results was not considered to be a neutral process, but rather the findings detailed in this thesis were clarified and refined in the act of writing about life on the Coast. While it is anticipated that such a framework will provide a useful guide for researchers in the short and medium term, such a framework will need to evolve and adapt to future theoretical challenges.

## 5.4 FUTURE RESEARCH

Finally, both the findings generated through my casework on the NW Coast, as well as the considerable theoretical and methodological revisions charted in this thesis, raise a number of issues that require further empirical and analytical investigation. As way of conclusion, I specify four potential areas of inquiry that have emerged from my research. These are:

- *An expanded discursive research program within the fields of community studies, youth studies, and migration.* While my work provided insight into the recurrence of some narratives in a particular place and time, a wider-reaching discursive research program would enable further comparisons of these findings with other discursive tendencies within each of these fields. In particular, such a program would complement the burgeoning body of quantitative, demographic research on internal migration. Such a research program would enable further consideration of the employment of particular classifications within social scientific research and within popular media, and, in turn, enable researchers to trace both the incorporation of popular assumptions into social scientific research, and the dissemination of social scientific concepts within media portrayal.
- *Further application of a Foucaultian view of governance (in which the state is considered to be hybrid and contingent) in contemporary social research.* Although the writing of Foucault has already been widely influential within the humanities, there are some fields that have yet to engage extensively with the challenges posed by Foucaultian inquiry or rather the new 'sociology of governance' (Rose 1999a). Youth studies and migration research, fields that have an applied orientation, have been particularly resistant to this approach. This is a shame as it is those scholars, who regularly operate within the policy arena, who are best placed to view the limits of classical political theories in the face of a hybrid, contingent and tenuous state. Not only does a Foucaultian view of governance address some of the limits of classical political



theories, it also encourages a more reflexive understanding of the social scientists' role within the process of governance.

- *Longer-term view of economic restructuring and cultural change.* While my research contributes to existing research on economic restructuring in Australia by considering the intersection of economic restructuring and cultural disruption and renewal in the later part of the twentieth century, a longitudinal research program that documents the economic cycles and the cultural development of particular regions would contribute further to our understanding of how regional community life in Australia is made and remade with each generation. Of course, this broad, long-term program has already commenced under the label of community studies in Australia, with the onus on future generations of Australian social researchers to continue to invoke these early findings in the light of new research, and to adapt and advance this robust sociological research method in the light of new theoretical challenges.
- *More empirical research on the relationship between young migrants and their family/regional/national home.* The pathways of young people have been granted extensive treatment in social research as the question of what constitutes a successful transition is a pressing policy concern. However, less attention has been paid to the ongoing negotiations that occur amongst families, friends and neighbours as young people move between jobs and places. While my research begins to chart the effects of out-migration on young people and their relationships with their families and peers, I have only briefly addressed the effects of return migration. Further research on how young people manage their relationships with their home community and their family over a longer time period, and how these relationships are reconstituted and renewed on the young person's return, are key issues which require further consideration in the Australian context.

## REFERENCES

- Abercrombie, Nicholas, Stephen Hill and Bryan Turner (1980) *The Dominant Ideology Thesis* London: Allen and Unwin.
- Adams, Rebecca and Graham Allan (1998) (eds.) *Placing Friendship in Context* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Allan, Graham (1998) 'Friendship, sociology and social structure' in *Journal of Social and Personal Relationships* London: Sage: 685-702.
- Althusser, Louis (1971/ 1984) *Essays on Ideology* London: Verso.
- Ashe, Fidelma (1999) Chapter 5 'The subject' in F. Ashe, A. Finlayson, M. Lloyd, A. MacKenzie, J. Martin and S. O'Neill (eds.) *Contemporary Social and Political Theory: An Introduction* Buckingham: Open University Press: 88-110.
- Austin, Diane (1984) *Australian Sociologies* Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1990-1999) *Tasmanian Statistical Indicators — Catalogue Number 1303.6* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1994) *Tasmanian Statistical Indicators — Catalogue Number 1303.6*, September, Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1999a) *Tasmanian Year Book 2000 — Catalogue Number 1301.6* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (1999b) *Regional Statistics, Tasmania 1999 — Catalogue Number 1362.6* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) (2002) *2001 Census Data — 18-24 Year Old Persons SD of Usual Residence One Year Prior, Tasmania* Unpublished data.
- Australian Housing and Urban Research Institute (AHURI) (1999) *Community Opportunity and Vulnerability in Australia's Cities and Towns* Melbourne: AHURI.
- Babbie, Earl (1999) *The Basics of Social Research* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth.
- Baldassar, Loretta (2001) *Visits Home: Migration Experiences between Italy and Australia* Carlton South, Victoria: Melbourne University Press.
- Bauman, Zygmunt (1995) *Life in Fragments: Essays in Postmodern Morality* Oxford: Blackwell.
- Bauman, Zygmunt (2000) *Liquid Modernity* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Bauman, Zygmunt (2001) *The Individualized Society* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Beck, Ulrich (1992) *Risk Society: Towards a New Modernity* London: Sage.

Beck, Ulrich and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1996) 'Individualization and 'precarious freedoms': Perspectives and controversies of a subject-orientated sociology' in P. Heelas, S. Lash. and P. Morris (eds.) *Detraditionalization: Critical Reflections on Authority and Identity* London: Blackwell: 23-47.

Becker, Howard (1973) *Outsiders: Studies in the Sociology of Deviance* New York: Free Press.

Beer, Andrew (2000) Chapter 10 'Regional policy and development in Australia: Running out of solutions?' in Bill Pritchard and Phil McManus (eds.) (2000) *Land of Discontent: The Dynamics of Change in Rural and Regional Australia* Sydney NSW: UNSW Press: 160-194.

Beijer, G. (1969) 'Brain drain as a burden, a stimulus and a challenge to European integration' in Bechhofer, F. *Population Growth and the Brain Drain* Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

Bell, Daniel (1973) *The Coming of Post-Industrial Society* New York: Basic Books.

Bell, Vicki (1999) 'Performativity and belonging' in *Theory, Culture and Society*, 16(2): 1-10.

Bell, Colin and Howard Newby (1972) *Community Studies: An Introduction to the Sociology of Community* New York: Praeger Publishers.

Bell, Colin and Howard Newby (eds., with a foreword by Norbert Elias) (1974) *The Sociology of Community: A Selection of Readings* London and Oregon: Frank Cass and Company Limited.

Bennett, Ernest N. (1914) *Problems of Village Life* London: Williams and Norgate.

Bennett, Helen (1992) *Locational Disadvantage Survey of Community Perceptions, Far North West Region, Tasmania [draft report]* Tasmania: Department of Community Services and Health.

Berelson, B. (1952/1971) *Content Analysis in Communication Research* New York: Hafner.

Berger, Peter and Thomas Luckmann (1966) *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* London: Penguin.

Bessant, Judith, Howard Sercombe and Rob Watts (eds.) (1998) *Youth Studies: An Australian Perspective* South Melbourne: Addison Wesley Longman.

Bhabha, Homi K. (1994) *The Location of Culture* London: Routledge.

Blumer, Herbert (1969) *Symbolic Interactionism* Englewood Cliffs, NJ.: Prentice-Hall.

Bottomley, Gillian (1979) *After the Greek Odyssey: A Study of Greek Australians* Brisbane: University of Queensland Press.

- Bottomley, Gillian (1992) *From Another Place* Victoria: Cambridge University Press.
- Bottomley, Gillian and Marie de Lepervanche (1984) *Ethnicity, Class and Gender in Australia* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Bowker, Geoffrey C. and Susan Leigh Star (2000) *Sorting Things Out: Classification and Its Consequences* Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.
- Bowman, Margaret (1981) *Beyond the Cities* Melbourne: Longman and Cheshire.
- Boyle, Paul and Keith Halfacree (eds.) (1998) *Migration Into Rural Areas: Theories and Issue* Chichester: John Wiley and Sons.
- Brah, Avtar (1996) *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* London: Routledge.
- Branaman, Ann (2001) *Self and Society* Malden, MA: Blackwell.
- Brooks, Rachel (2002) 'Transitional friends? Young people's strategies to manage and maintain their friendships during a period of restructuring' *Journal of Youth Studies* 5(4): 449-467.
- Bryson, Lois and Faith Thompson (1972) *An Australian Newtown* Ringwood: Penguin.
- Bryson, Lois and Ian Winter (1999) *Social Change, Suburban Lives: An Australian Newtown, 1960s to 1990s* St Leonards: Allen & Unwin.
- Bureau of Rural Sciences (BRS) (1999) *Country Matters: Social Atlas of Rural and Regional Australia* Canberra: BRS.
- Burns, Tom (1992) *Erving Goffman* Routledge: London and New York.
- Burrell, Gibson (1988) 'Modernism, post modernism and organizational analysis 2: The contribution of Michel Foucault' *Organization Studies* 9(2): 221-235.
- Butler, Judith (1990) *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity* London and New York: Routledge.
- Butler, Judith (1993) *Bodies that Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* London and New York: Routledge.
- Calhoun, Craig (ed.) (1994) *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Carmichael, Laurie [Employment and Skills Formation Council] (1992) *The Australian Vocational Certificate Training System* Canberra: National Board of Employment, Education and Training.
- Chorafas, Dimitris N. (1968) *The Knowledge Revolution: An Analysis of the International Brain Market and the Challenge to Europe* London: George Allen and Unwin.

Connell, Robert W. (1977) *Ruling Class, Ruling Culture* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Connell, Robert W. (1982) *Making the Difference* Sydney: George Allen and Unwin.

Connell, Robert W. and Terry Irving (1980) *Class Structure in Australian History* Melbourne: Longman Chesire.

Comte, Auguste (1830-1842/1974) *The Positive Philosophy* Harriet Martineau (trans.) New York: AMS Press.

Cooke, Philip (1987) 'Individuals, localities and postmodernism' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 5: 408-412.

Cooke, Philip (ed.) (1989) *Localities: The Changing Face of Urban Britain* London and Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Cote, James E. (2002) 'The role of identity capital in the transition to adulthood: The individualization thesis examined' *Journal of Youth Studies* 5(2): 117-134.

Cowlishaw, Gillian (1988) *Black, White or Brindle: Race in Rural Australia* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Creswell, John W. (1998) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Traditions* Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Crook, Stephen (1991) *Modernist Radicalism and its Aftermath: Foundationalism and Anti-Foundationalism in Radical Social Theory* London: Routledge.

Cuff, E.C., W.W. Sharrock and D.W. Francis (1998) *Perspectives in Sociology. Fourth Edition.* London and New York: Routledge.

Danaher, Geoff, Tony Schirato and Jen Webb (2000) *Understanding Foucault* St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin.

Dean, Mitchell (1999) *Governmentality: Power and Rule in Modern Society* London: Sage.

Dempsey, Kenneth (1990) *Smalltown: A Study of Social Inequality, Cohesion and Belonging* Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Denzin, Norman K. (1992) *Symbolic Interactionism and Cultural Studies: The Politics of Interpretation* Oxford: Blackwell.

Department of Employment, Education and Training, and Department of Primary Industries and Energy (DEET and DPIE) (1991) *Report of the Review of Agricultural and Related Education — 'The McColl Report' — Report, Findings and Recommendations (Vol.1)* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Department of Transport and Regional Services (DTRS) (2002) *Regional Australia: A partnership for Stronger Regions. Statement by John Anderson, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister for Transport and Regional Services and Wilson Tuckey, Minister for Regional*

*Services, Territories and Local Government* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Department of Treasury and Finance (DTF), Tasmania (2003) *Tasmania's Population: Trends, Changes and Policies* Hobart: Department of Treasurer and Finance.

Douglas, Mary (1966) *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Douglas, Mary (1996) *Thought Styles: Critical Essays on Good Taste* London: Sage.

Dreyfus, Hubert L. and Paul Rabinow (1983) *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics* (Second edition) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Durkheim, Emile (1893/1964) *The Division of Labour in Society* G. Simpson (trans.) New York: Free Press.

Durkheim, Emile (1912/1976) *The Elementary Forms of the Religious Life. Second edition.* J.W. Swain (trans.) London: Allen and Unwin.

Durkheim, Emile and Marcel Mauss (1903/1963) *Primitive Classification: An Inquiry into the Origins and Cultural Expressions of Categories* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Dwyer, Peter and Joanna Wyn (1998a) 'A new agenda: Changing life-patterns of the post-1970 generation' *International Sociological Association 14th World Congress* Montreal: IBYR: 27-34.

Dwyer, Peter and Joanna Wyn (1998b) 'Post-compulsory education policy in Australia and its impact on participant pathways and outcomes in the 1990s' *Journal of Education Policy* 13(3): 285-300.

Elias, Norbert (1938/1991) *The Society of Individuals* Michael Schroter (ed.) E. Jephcott (trans.) Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Encel, Solomon (1962) *Cabinet Government in Australia* Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.

Encel, Solomon and Alan Davies (eds.) (1965) *Australian Society: A Sociological Introduction* Melbourne: F.W. Chesire.

Encel, Solomon (1970) *Equality and Authority: A Study of Class, Status and Power in Australia* Melbourne: F.W. Chesire.

Fagan, Robert H. and Michael Webber (1994) *Global Restructuring: The Australian Experience* Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Fairclough, Norman (1992) *Discourse and Social Change* Cambridge: Polity Press.

Felmingham, Bruce in Marcus Haward and Peter Larmour (eds.) Chapter 5 'Consequences of the Financial Crisis' *The Tasmanian Parliamentary Accord and Public Policy 1989-*

1992, *Accommodating the New Politics?* Canberra: Federalism Research Centre, Australian National University: 45-58.

Finch, Lynette (1993) Chapter 12 'On the streets: Working-class youth culture in the nineteenth century' in Rob White (ed.) *Youth Subcultures: Theory, History and the Australian Experience* National Clearinghouse for Youth Studies: 75-79.

Findlay, Allan and Elspeth Graham (1991) 'The challenge facing population geography' *Progress in Human Geography* 15: 149-162.

Finlayson, Alan (1999) Chapter 7 'Culture' in F. Ashe, A. Finlayson, M. Lloyd, A. MacKenzie, J. Martin and S. O'Neill (eds.) *Contemporary Social and Political Theory: An Introduction* Buckingham: Open University Press: 131-154.

Fontana, Andrea and James H. Frey (2000) 'The interview: From structured questions to negotiated text' in Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage: 645-672.

Forman, J. and J. Rymer (1999) 'Defining the genre of the "case write-up"' *The Journal of Business Communication* 36(2): 103-121.

Fortier, Anne-Marie (2000) *Migrant Belongings: Memory, Space, Identity* Oxford and New York: Berg.

Foucault, Michel (1966/2002) *The Order of Things* London: Routledge Classics.

Foucault, Michel (1971) 'Orders of discourse' *Social Sciences Information* 10(2): 7-30.

Foucault, Michel (1975/1977) *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.

Foucault, Michel (1976/1978) *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality: 1* R. Hurley (trans.) London: Penguin Books.

Foucault, Michel (1978/1991) 'Governmentality' reprinted in G. Burchill, C. Gordon and P. Miller (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*, London: Harvester Wheatsheaf: 87-104.

Foucault, Michel (1982) 'The subject and power' *Critical Inquiry* Summer 1982 (8) Chicago: University of Chicago: 777-795.

Foucault, Michel (1986) *The Care of the Self: The History of Sexuality: 3* R. Hurley (trans.) London: Penguin.

Foucault, Michel (1988) 'Technologies of the self' in L.H. Martin, H. Gutman and P.H. Hutton (eds.) *Technologies of the Self: A Seminar with Michel Foucault* London: Tavistock: 16-49.

Furlong, Andy and Fred Cartmel (1997) *Young People and Social Change: Individualisation and Risk in Late Modernity* Buckingham: Open University Press.



- Gabriel, Michelle (2004) 'Aspirationalism: The Search for Respect in an Unequal Society' in E. Hatrick, R. Hogg and S. Supski (eds.) *Write/Up - Journal of Australian Studies* Issue 80: 147-156.
- Gabriel, Michelle and Maggie Walter (2002) 'Higher Education on the North-West Coast' *Tasmanian Social Issues* 4(1): 6-11.
- Garasky, Steven (2002) 'Where are they going? A comparison of urban and rural youths' locational choices after leaver the parental home' *Social Science Research* 31(3): 409-431.
- Gibson, Katherine (2001) 'Regional subjection and becoming' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19: 639-667.
- Giddens, Anthony (1984) *The Constitution of Society: Outline of the Theory of Structuration* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Giddens, Anthony (1991) *Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gilroy, Paul (1994) 'Diaspora' *Paragraph* 17(3): 207-12.
- Glaser, William A. (1978) *The Brain Drain: Emigration and Return* Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Goffman, Erving (1959/1971) *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* New York: Penguin Books.
- Goffman, Erving (1961/ 1968) *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates* Harmondsworth: Penguin.
- Goffman, Erving (1963/1974) *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity* New York: Aronson.
- Graham, Peter. A. (1892) *The Rural Exodus: The Problem of the Village and the Town* London: Methuen.
- Graham, Elspeth and Paul Boyle (2001) 'Editorial Introduction: (Re)theorising Population Geography: Mapping the Unfamiliar' *International Journal of Population Geography* 7: 389-394.
- Gramsci, Antonio (1929-35/1971) *Selections from the Prison Notebooks* London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Green, Antony (2001) Chapter 5 'Bush politics: The rise and the fall of the Country/National party' in Lockie, Stewart and Lisa Bourke (eds.) *Rurality Bites: The Social and Environmental Transformation of Rural Australia* Annadale: Pluto Press: 61-71.
- Gregory, Robert and Boyd Hunter (1996) 'Increasing regional inequality and the decline of manufacturing' in P. Sheehan, B. Grewal and M. Kummick (eds.) *Dialogues on Australia's Future: In Honour of the Late Professor Ronald Henderson* Melbourne: Centre for Strategic Economic Studies, Victoria University.

Grosz, Elizabeth (1994) *Volatile Bodies: Toward a Corporeal Feminism* St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.

Halfacree, Keith and Paul Boyle (1993) 'The challenge facing migration research: the case for a biographical approach' *Progress in Human Geography* 17(3): 333-348.

Hall, Stuart (1996) Chapter 1 'Introduction' in S. Hall and P. DuGuy (eds.) *Questions of Cultural Identity* London: Sage: 1-17.

Hall, Tom, Amanda Coffey and Howard Williamson (1999) 'Self, space and place: Youth identities and citizenship' *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 20(4): 501-513.

Hanson, Dallas (1993) *APPM Strike in Burnie 1992: A Case Study Research Report 4* Launceston: University of Tasmania.

Haraway, Donna (1991) *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature* London: Routledge.

Harding, Anne and Harry Greenwell (2002) *Trends in Income and Expenditure Inequality in the 1980s and 1990s - A Re-examination and Further Results. Discussion paper no.57.* Canberra: National Centre for Social and Economic Modelling (NATSEM), University of Canberra.

Haward, Marcus and Peter Larmour (1993) Chapter 1 'The Accord and Tasmanian Public Policy 1989-1992' in Marcus Haward and Peter Larmour (eds.) *The Tasmanian Parliamentary Accord and Public Policy 1989-1992, Accommodating the New Politics?* Canberra: Federalism Research Centre, Australian National University: 1-12.

Hillman, Kylie and Gary Marks (2002) *Becoming an Adult: Leaving Home, Relationships and Home Ownership Among Australian Youth* Research Report Number 28, September, Melbourne: Australian Council for Educational Research.

Hobsbawm, Eric (1995) *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* London: Abacus.

Hollingshead, A.B. R. Ellis and E. Kirby (1954) 'Social Mobility and Mental Illness' *American Sociological Review* 19: 577-591.

Hugo, Graeme (1999) *Atlas of the Australian People: 1996 Census: Tasmania* Canberra: Department of Immigration and Multicultural Affairs.

Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission (HREOC) (1999) *Bush Talks* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.

Hunter, Ian (1994) *Rethinking the School: Subjectivity, Bureaucracy and Criticism* St Leonards: Allen and Unwin.

Jackson, Natalie and Rebecca Kippen (2001) 'Whither Tasmania? A note on Tasmania's population problem' *People and Place* 9(1): 27-37.

Jenkins, Richard (1996) *Social Identity* Routledge: London.

- Johnson, Allan G. (1995) *The Blackwell Dictionary of Sociology* Oxford: Blackwell.
- Jones, Gill (1995) *Leaving Home* Buckingham, Open University Press.
- Jones, Gill (1999a) "The same people in the same places?" Socio-spatial identities and migration in youth' *Sociology* 33(1), 1-22.
- Jones, Gill (1999b) Chapter 9 'Trail-blazers and path-followers: Social reproduction and geographical mobility in youth' in Sara Arber and Claudine Attias-Donfut (eds.) *The Myth of Generational Conflict: The Family and State in Ageing Societies* London: Routledge: 154-173.
- Jones, Gill and Claire Wallace (1992) *Youth, Family and Citizenship* Buckingham: Open University Press.
- Jones, L. and K. Williamson (1979) 'The birth of the schoolroom', *Ideology and Consciousness – Governing the Present* 6: 58-110.
- Julian, Roberta (2003) 'Transnational Identities in the Hmong Diaspora' in Timothy J. Scrase, Todd J.M.Holden and Scott Baum (eds) *Globalization, Culture and Inequality in Asia* Melbourne: Trans Pacific Press: 119-143.
- Kelly, Paul (1992) *The End of Certainty: The Story of the 1980s* St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin.
- Kelly, Paul (2000) *Paradise Divided: The Changes, the Challenges, the Choices for Australia* St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin.
- Kilpatrick, Sue and Joan Abbott-Chapman (2002) 'Rural young people's work/study priorities and aspirations: The influence of family social capital' *The Australian Educational Researcher* 29 (1) 43-68.
- Laclau, Ernesto (ed.) (1994) *The Making of Political Identities* London: Verso.
- Laclau, Ernesto and Chantal Mouffe (1985) *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* W. Moore and P. Cammack (trans.) London: Verso.
- Latour, Bruno (1993) *We Have Never Been Modern* C. Porter (trans.) Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lawson, Victoria (1999) 'Questions of migration and belonging: Understandings of migration under neoliberalism in Ecuador' *International Journal of Population Geography* 5: 261-276.
- Lockie, Stewart and Lisa Bourke (2001) (eds.) *Rurality Bites: The Social and Environmental Transformation of Rural Australia* Annadale: Pluto Press.
- Looker, E. Dianne (1997) Chapter 7 'Rural-urban differences in youth transitions to adulthood' in R. Bollman and L. Bryden (eds.) *Rural Employment: An International Perspective* New York: CAB International: 85-98.

- Looker, E. Dianne and Peter Dwyer (1998) 'Education and Negotiated Reality: Complexities Facing Rural Youth in the 1990s' *Journal of Youth Studies* 1(1): 5-21.
- MacKay, Hugh (1993) *Reinventing Australia: The Mind and Mood of Australia in the 90s* Sydney: Angus and Robertson.
- Manning, Philip (1992) *Erving Goffman and Modern Sociology* Cambridge, UK : Polity Press.
- Marginson, Simon (1993) *Education and Public Policy in Australia* Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.
- Martin, Brian (1992) 'Scientific fraud and the power structure of science' *Prometheus*, 10(1), June: 83-98.
- Martin, Biddy and Chandra T. Mohanty (1986) Chapter 12 'Feminist politics: What's home got to do with it?' in T. de Lauretis (e.) *Feminist Studies/ Critical Studies* Bloomington: Indiana University Press: 191-212.
- Marshall, Joan and Natalie Foster (2002) "'Between belonging": Habitus and the migration experience' in *The Canadian Geographer* 46(1): 63-83.
- Marx, Karl (1852/1973) 'The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte' reproduced in *Surveys from Exile* Harmondsworth: Penguin Books.
- Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels (1846/1974) *The German Ideology. Second edition.* London: Lawrence and Wishart.
- Marx, Karl and Frederick Engels (1848/1965) *Manifesto of the Communist Party* Peking: Foreign Languages Press.
- Mayer, E. (1992) *Putting General Education to Work: the Key Competencies Report* Canberra: Australian Education Council.
- McDonald, Kevin (1999) *Struggles for Subjectivity: Identity, Action and Youth Experience* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McDowell, Linda (1999) *Gender, Identity and Place* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- McHoul, Alec and Wendy Grace (1993) *A Foucault Primer: Discourse, Power and the Subject* Carlton: Melbourne University Press.
- McNay, Lois (1994) *Foucault: A Critical Introduction* Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Mead, George H. (1934) *Mind, Self and Society* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Meller, Helen (1980) Chapter 9 'Cities and evolution: Patrick Geddes as an international prophet of town planning before 1914' in Anthony Sutcliffe (ed.) *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning 1800-1914* London: Mansell Publishing: 199-224.

- Meredyth, Denise (1998) 'Corporatising education' in M. Dean and B. Hindess (eds.) *Governing Australia: Studies in Contemporary Rationalities of Government* Melbourne: Cambridge University Press: 20-46.
- Meredyth, Denise and D. Tyler (1993) 'Introduction' of D. Meredyth and D. Tyler (eds.) *Child and Citizen: Genealogies of Schooling and Subjectivity* Griffith: Cultural Policy Studies, Griffith University: 1-10.
- Metcalf, Andrew (1988) *For Freedom and Dignity: Historical Agency and Class Structures in the Coalfields of NSW* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.
- Minichiello, Victor, Rosalie Aroni, Eric Rimewell, Loris Alexander (1995) *In-Depth Interviewing: Principles, Techniques, Analysis. Second Edition.* Sydney: Addison Wesley Longman Australia.
- Mohanty, Chandra T., Ann Russo and Lourdes Toures (eds.) (1991) *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Molgat, Marc (2002) 'Leaving home in Quebec: Theoretical and Social Implications of (Im)mobility Among Youth' *Journal of Youth Studies* 5(2): 135-152.
- Morris, Miranda (1995) *The Pink Triangle: The Gay Law Reform Debate in Tasmania* Sydney: UNSW Press.
- Mouffe, Chantal (1979) 'Hegemony and ideology in Gramsci' in Chantal Mouffe (ed.) *Gramsci and Marxist Theory* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd: 168-204.
- Mouffe, Chantal and Ernesto Laclau (1985) *Hegemony and the New Socialist Strategy* London: Verso.
- Mules, Warrick and Helen Miller (eds.) (1997) *Mapping Regional Cultures* Rockhampton: Rural Social and Economic Research Centre.
- Munck, Thomas (2000) *The Enlightenment: A Comparative Social History 1721-1794* London: Arnold.
- Musgrove, Frank (1963) *The Migratory Elite* London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- National Institute of Economic and Industry Research (NIEIR) (1999) *State of the Regions* prepared for Australian Local Government Association.
- Ni Laoire, Caitríona (2000) 'Conceptualising Irish rural youth migration: A biographical approach' *International Journal of Population Geography* 6: 229-243.
- Nietzsche, Friedrich (1909/1968) *The Will To Power* New York: The Viking Press.
- Nisbet, Robert A. (1967) *The Sociological Tradition* London: Heinemann.
- Noble, G., Poynting, S. and Tabar, P. (1999) 'Lebanese youth and social identity' in White, R. (Ed.) *Australian Youth Subcultures: On the Margins and in the Mainstream* Hobart: Australian Clearinghouse of Youth Studies: 130-139.

- Ogle, W. (1889) 'The alleged de-population of the rural districts of England' *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society*: 205-232.
- O'Neill, Shane (1999) Chapter 1 'Rationality' in F. Ashe, A. Finlayson, M. Lloyd, A. MacKenzie, J. Martin and S. O'Neill (eds.) *Contemporary Social and Political Theory: An Introduction* Buckingham: Open University Press: 1-24.
- Orwell, George (1949/1965) *Nineteen Eighty-Four* London: Heinemann Educational Books.
- O'Shaughnessy, Michael and Jane Stadler (2002) *Media and Society: An Introduction* (Second edition) South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Oxley, Harry G. (1974) *Mateship in Local Organization* St Lucia: University of Queensland.
- Pahl, Raymond E. (2000) *On Friendship* Cambridge: Polity.
- Parham, Dean [Industry Commission, Australia] (1997) *Assessing Australia's Productivity Performance* Canberra: Commonwealth of Australia.
- Parnell, Mike (1993) *Population Movements and the Third World* London: Routledge.
- Pels, Dick (2000) 'Reflexivity: One step up' *Theory, Culture and Society* 17(3): 1-25.
- Peel, Mark (1995) *Good Times, Hard Times: The Past and the Future in Elizabeth Carlton* Melbourne University Press.
- Phillips, Derek (1985) *Making More Adequate Provision: State Education in Tasmania, 1839-1985* research by Michael Sprod, Tasmania: Education Department.
- Philo, Chris (2001) 'Accumulating populations: Bodies, institutions and space' *International Journal of Population Geography* 7: 473-490.
- Pink, Kerry (1990) *And Wealth for Toil: A History of North-West and Western Tasmania, 1825-1900* Burnie: Advocate Marketing Services.
- Pink, Kerry (2000) *Campsite to City: A History of Burnie, 1827-2000* Burnie: Burnie City Council.
- Poiner, Gretchen (1990) *The Good Old Rule: Gender and Other Power Relationships in a Rural Community* Sydney: Sydney University Press.
- Pooley, Colin G. and Jean Turnbull (1998) *Migration and Mobility in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century* London: UCL Press.
- Porter, Roy (2001) *The Enlightenment Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire, New York: Palgrave.*
- Potter, Jonathon and Margaret Wetherell (1994) 'Analyzing discourse' in A. Bryman and R.G. Burgess (eds.) *Analyzing Qualitative Data* London and New York: Routledge: 47-66.



Prime Minister of Australia (1994) *Working Nation* Canberra: Australian Government Publishing Service.

Pritchard, Bill and Phil McManus (eds.) (2000) *Land of Discontent: The Dynamics of Change in Rural and Regional Australia* Sydney: UNSW Press.

Pusey, Michael (1991) *Economic Rationalism in Canberra: A Nation Building State Changes its Mind* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Pusey, Michael (2003) *The Experience of Middle Australia: The Dark Side of Economic Reform* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ratcliffe, John (1981) *An Introduction to Town and Country Planning. Second edition.* London: Hutchinson Educational.

Richardson, A. (1959) 'Some Psycho-Social Aspects of British Emigration to Australia' *British Journal of Sociology* 10: 327-337.

Richardson, L. (1994) Chapter 32 'Writing: A method of inquiry' in N. Denzin and Y. Lincoln (eds.) *The Handbook of Qualitative Research* Thousand Oaks: Sage: 516-544.

Robson, Leslie Lloyd and (updated by) Michael Roe (1997) *A Short History of Tasmania* Melbourne: Oxford University Press.

Rose, Nikolas (1996) 'Authority and the genealogy of subjectivity' in P. Heelas, S. Lash and P. Morris *Detraditionalization: Critical Reflections on Authority and Identity* Cambridge, MA: Blackwell: 294-327.

Rose, Nikolas (1999a) *Powers of Freedom: Reframing Political Thought* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Rose, Nikolas (1999b) *Governing the Soul: The Shaping of the Private Self* (Second edition) London: Free Association Books.

Said, Edward (1978) *Orientalism* London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul.

Salt, Bernard (2000) *Population Growth Report 2000. Eleventh Edition.* Sydney: KPMG Consulting.

Saville, John (1957) *Rural Depopulation in England and Wales 1851-1951* London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Schütz, Alfred (1945) 'The homcomer' *American Journal of Sociology* 5: 369-76.

Sennett Richard and Jonathon Cobb (1977) *The Hidden Injuries of Class* Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Simmel, Georg (1971) *On Individuality and Social Forms: Selected Writings* (Edited and Introduced by Donald N. Levine) Chicago: University of Chicago Press.



Smyth, Paul and Bettina Cass (eds.) (1998) *Contesting the Australian Way: States, Markets and Civil Society* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Sorokin, Pitrim A., Carle C. Zimmerman and Charles J. Galpin, (1932/ 1965) *A Systematic Source Book in Rural Sociology: III* New York: Russell and Russell.

Spivak, Gayatri C. (1988) 'Can the Subaltern Speak?' in C. Nelson and L. Grossberg (ed.) *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press: 271-313.

Stacey, Margaret (1974) 'The myth of community studies' in Colin Bell and Howard Newby (eds., with a foreword by Norbert Elias) (1974) *The Sociology of Community: A Selection of Readings* London and Oregon: Frank Cass and Company Limited: 13-26.

Stake, Robert E. (2000) 'Case studies' in Norman Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (eds.) *Handbook of Qualitative Research* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage: 435-454.

Stilwell, Frank (1974) *Australian Urban and Regional Development* Brookvale, NSW: Australia and New Zealand Book Co.

Stilwell, Frank (1992) *Understanding Cities and Regions: Spatial Political Economy* Leichhardt, NSW: Pluto Press.

Strinati, Dominic (1995) *An Introduction to Theories of Popular Culture* London: Routledge.

Sutcliffe, Anthony (1980) Chapter 1 'Introduction: The debate on nineteenth-century planning' in Anthony Sutcliffe (ed.) *The Rise of Modern Urban Planning 1800-1914* London: Mansell Publishing: 1-10.

Taylor, Charles (1989) *Sources of the Self: The Making of Modern Identity* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Tönnies, Ferdinand (1887/1974) *Community and Association (Gemeinschaft und Gesellschaft)* London : Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Touraine, Alain (1974) *The Post-Industrial Society* London: Wildwood House.

Townsley, Wilfred A. (1991) *Tasmania: From Colony to Statehood, 1803-1945* Hobart: St David's Park Publishing.

Turkle, Sherry (1995) *Life on the Screen: Identity in the Age of the Internet* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Turner, Bryan (1984) *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory* Oxford: Blackwell.

University of Tasmania, Review Committee (May 1992) *Review of Agricultural and Related Education*, Presented to the Vice-Chancellor by the Working Party, Hobart.

University of Tasmania (1996) *Total Enrolments and Load, 1988-1996 by Campus*  
Unpublished data available on <http://www.utas.edu.au/docs/statistics> (Sourced on 1st July 2003).

Urry, John (1987) 'Society, space and locality' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 5: 435-444.

Vinitzky-Seroussi, Vered (1998) *After Pomp and Circumstance: High School Reunions as Autobiographical Occasion* Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press.

Walter, Margaret (1999) *Unemployment and Socio-Economic Indicators, Mersey-Lyell District* Report paper prepared for the University of Tasmania, Hobart.

Warner, William L. and Paul S. Lunt (1941/1973a) *The Social Life of a Modern Community* New Haven: Yale University Press.

Warner, William L. and Paul S. Lunt (1942/1973b) *The Status System of a Modern Community* Westport: Greenwood Press.

Waters, Malcolm (1995) *Globalization* London: Routledge.

Weber, Max (1958) *The City* (Translated and edited by Don Martindale and Gertrud Neuwirth) Glencoe, Illinois: The Free Press.

Wetherell, Margaret, Stephanie Taylor and Simeon Yates (eds.) (2001) *Discourse Theory and Practice: A Reader* London: Sage.

Wieringa, Anitra (1999) 'Imagined trajectories: Local culture and social identity' in Rob White (ed.) *Australian Youth Subcultures: On the Margins and in the Mainstream* Hobart: Australian Clearinghouse for Youth Studies: 189-199.

Wild, Ronald A. (1974) *Bradstow: A Study of Status, Class and Power in a Small Australian Town* Sydney: Angus and Robertson.

Wild, Ronald A. (1981) *Australian Community Studies and Beyond* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Williams, Claire (1981) *Open Cut: The Working Class in an Australian Mining Town* Sydney: Allen and Unwin.

Woolgar, Steve (1988) Chapter 2 'Reflexivity is the Ethnographer of the Text' in Steve Woolgar (ed.) *Knowledge and Reflexivity: New Frontiers in the Sociology of Knowledge* London: Sage: 14-36.

Wu, Zhongmin and Shujie Yao (2003) 'Intermigration and intramigration in China: A theoretical and empirical analysis' *China Economic Review* 14(4): 371-385.

Wyn, Joanna and Peter Dwyer (1999) 'New directions in research on youth in transition' *Journal of Youth Studies* 2: 5-21.

Wyn, Joanna and Peter Dwyer (2000) 'New patterns of youth transition in education'  
*International Social Science Journal* 164: 147-159.

Wyn, Joanna, Helen Stokes and John Stafford (1998) *Young People Living in Rural Australia in the 1990s* Parkville: Youth Research Centre, University of Melbourne.

Wyn, Johanna and Rob White (1997) *Rethinking Youth* St Leonards, NSW: Allen and Unwin.

Young, Christabel (1987) *Young People Leaving Home: The Trend Towards Independence Monograph 9*, Canberra: Australian National University and Australian Institute of Studies.

Young, Christabel (1994) 'The family life cycle approach in demography' in P. Meyer and D. Lucas (eds.) *Beginning Population Studies* Canberra: National Centre for Development Studies, Australian National University: 128-140.

## APPENDIX A

Table A.1: Profile of interviewees

Pseudonym	Date of Interview	Age	Sex	Completed High School (Yr 10)	Level of HS Education*	Hometown	Current Home	Migration Status
Robert	30-Jan-01	23	male	1994	Year 10	Ulverstone	overseas	left
David	31-Jan-01	19	male	1997	Year 10	Ulverstone	overseas	left
Lisa	31-Jan-01	25	female	1992	Year 12	Ulverstone	NW Coast	returned
Neil	21-Feb-01	24	male	1993	Year 10	Ulverstone	interstate	left
Rachel	29-Mar-01	22	female	1995	Year 12	Burnie	NW Coast	returned
Nicole	15-Apr-01	22	female	1995	Year 12	Ulverstone	Hobart	left
Emma	12-May-01	19	female	1997	Year 12	Burnie	interstate	left
Laura	29-May-01	20	female	1996	Year 12	Ulverstone	Hobart	left
Alice	30-Oct-01	20	female	1996	Year 12	Ulverstone	NW Coast	stayed
Joe	1-June-01	26	male	1992	Year 12	Burnie	Hobart	left
Sean	12-Dec-01	19	male	1997	Year 12	Penguin	NW Coast/ Hobart	between
Jane	10-Jan-02	23	female	1994	Year 12	Burnie	interstate	left
Fiona	23-Jan-02	28	female	1990	Year 12	Devonport	NW Coast	returned
Tim	18-Feb-02	21	Male	1996	Year 12	Burnie	NW Coast/ interstate	between
Michael	18-Feb-02	21	male	1996	Year 10	Devonport	NW Coast	returned
Anna	18-Feb-02	20	female	1997	Year 10	Devonport	NW Coast	returned
Naomi	19-Feb-02	20	female	1996	Year 12	Devonport	NW Coast	stayed
Chris	19-Feb-02	21	male	1996	Year 10	Devonport	NW Coast	returned

- \* Nine of the interviewees had commenced or completed a university degree. Six of the interviewees had commenced or completed a *Technical And Further Education* (TAFE) program.

## **APPENDIX B**

### **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - YOUNG PEOPLE<sup>1</sup>**

#### **1. BRIEF HISTORY**

1.1 Could you provide a brief history of what you have done since completing year 10?

- a. Did you undertake further high school/ tertiary study? Discuss.
- b. Did you undertake an apprenticeship/ traineeship/ vocational training? Discuss.
- c. Discuss casual/part-time and full-time employment opportunities or lack of employment opportunities.
- d. Discuss opportunities for travel.

1.2 Could you provide a brief history of where you have lived since you left the town you grew up, how long you have lived in those places, and why you moved there (i.e., for education, relationship etc)?

- a. How old were you when you left home?
- b. Where did you move to?
- c. Why did you move there?
- d. How long did you stay in that place?

#### **2. TRANSITION**

2.1 Can you remember leaving home the first time? Was it difficult making that decision to leave? Would you have like to have stayed?

2.2 How did you cope? What was difficult/easy about managing the transition?

2.3 How do you think your parents coped with you leaving?

2.4 What were the most difficult things to adjust to?

2.5 How is the place where you live now different from the place where you grew up?

---

<sup>1</sup> This interview schedule was used to guide discussions with young people only. The order of the questions varied, and some of the questions were adapted or excluded depending on the young person's circumstances. For example, discussions with young people who had not left the Coast centred on their experiences of moving out of home, rather than away from the region.

2.6 What aspects of your life on the NW Coast do you miss most?

2.7 How do you think your life has changed since moving away from home?

### 3. FAMILY

3.1 Do your parents still live on the NW Coast?

3.2 Have any of your brothers and sisters moved away from home/ followed similar paths?

a. How old were they when they left home?

b. Where did they move to?

c. Why did they move there?

d. How long did they stay in that place?

e. Where do they live now?

3.3 How has your relationship with your parents changed since moving away from home?

a. How do you keep in contact?

b. How often do you speak to them?

3.4 How have your relationships with your brothers and sisters changed since moving away from home?

a. How do you keep in contact?

b. How often do you speak to them?

3.5 Have your friends followed similar paths? Have they left for similar reasons?

3.6 How have your relationships with your friends changed since moving away from home?

a. How do you keep in contact?

b. How often do you speak to them?

### VISITING

4.1 How often do you return to the NW Coast? Do you stay with family/ friends?

4.2 What is it like returning home?

4.3 What is it like seeing your parents, your brothers and sisters? Is it easy/ difficult to relate to your family? Explain.

4.4 (Of your friends) who do you catch up with when you return home?

4.5 Is it easy/difficult to relate to your friends? Explain.

4.6 a. What do you have in common? b. How are you different?

4.7 How have your friends at home changed? What are they doing now?

4.8 Do you think your hometown has changed much? In what ways?

## **HOMETOWN**

5.1 The NW Coast has experienced some decline in its major industries in recent years. How do you think this has affected local people, your family, your friends, yourself?

5.2 What about employment opportunities for people your age on the NW Coast? Has this improved/ declined?

5.3 What do you think are the main problems facing people your age who live on the NW Coast?

## **LIFE NOW**

6.1 Tell me about your life now? Are you working,/ studying?

6.2 What are the advantages/ disadvantages of living in .....?

6.3 Do you have any friends here in the city that have also come from rural towns? Is that common experience important?

6.4 How have you changed since moving away from home?

6.5 Would you like to return to NW Coast one day? Why/ why not?

## **CHECKLIST**

7.1 Where did you live when you were a child (town/ region)?

7.2 Which school did you graduate from?

7.3 What year did you graduate from high school?

7.4 At what age did you leave home for the first time?

7.5 How old are you?



## **INTERVIEW SCHEDULE - PARENTS**

### **FAMILY BACKGROUND**

1.1 Could you provide a brief history of when your children left home, and where they moved to (i.e., for education, relationship etc)?

a. How old were your children when they left home?

b. Where did they move to?

c. Why did they move there?

d. How long did they stay in that place?

1.2 Have any of your children returned home?

a. How old were your children when they returned home?

b. Why did they return home?

c. How long did they stay at home?

### **TRANSITION**

2.1 Thinking back to when your child/ren left home for the first time, was it difficult saying goodbye?

2.2 How did you help your child/ren with the transition?

2.3 How did the experience of your child/ren leaving home affect the family?

2.4 How was your daily routine affected by your child/ren leaving home?

2.5 Did your children (insert names) have different experiences of leaving home? Why do you think it easier/more difficult for .....?

### **KEEPING IN TOUCH**

3.1 How has your relationship with your children changed since they moved away from home? How often would you speak to them? How do you keep in touch?

3.2 How often do you visit your child/ren? Describe the last visit.

3.3 How often do your child/ren return to the NW Coast? Do they stay with yourself or friends?

3.4 What is it like when they return home? Is it easy/ difficult to relate to each other? Describe the last visit.

3.5 Would you like to live closer to your child/ren? Would you consider moving away from the NW Coast in the future? Do you have any plans to move closer to your child/ren?

